The Queer

المعجم العربي الكويري

Arab Glossary

Edited by Marwan Kaabour

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The queer Arab glossary =
Almuejam alearabiu alkubaraa
sga
33293049594874

Foreword by Rabih Alameddine
Illustrations by Haitham Haddad
Glossary edited by Suneela Mubayi

SAQI

This book is dedicated to

Mama & Baba
Sahar
Palestine
My queer comrades
Takweer community

'A playfully illustrated compendium of words from the affectionate to the derogatory.'
The Guardian

'Language reflects and creates reality and Marwan Kaabour's revolutionary volume insists on and makes possible a future rooted in the recognition of continuous histories.'
Sarah Schulman

'Playful, illuminating, and full of heart, *The Queer Arab Glossary* is a treasure chest that puts on record a vital part of our queer history. An invaluable time capsule of who and how we are.'
Saleem Haddad

'This gloriously confident book will be an eye-opening, often unashamedly sexual, revelation and education to most.'
The Bookseller

'Insightful, hilarious, sassy and deeply expansive.'
Dan Glass

'*The Queer Arab Glossary* conjures community, resilience and breathing space in the form of a book... [This] is but a beginning, but one that is brimming with aliveness and possibility.'
AnOther Magazine

'Marwan Kaabour has shown deft editorial skill in assembling this provocative and cheekily illustrated collection.'
Arab Digest

'Playful, sexy, fearless... a must read. A dissenting homage to the sexiness and seriousness of queer Arab Life.'
Amelia Abraham

'*The Queer Arab Glossary* brilliantly brings together Arab LGBTQ+ slang, drawing on words from the past and present to create the queer language of the Arab region.'
L'Orient Le Jour

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Foreword: The Book of Shibboleths

Rabih Alameddine

During the first days of the Lebanese Civil War, an apocryphal rumour swept the country, sometimes told as a warning, sometimes as a joke. It went like this: since the fighting at the time occurred between the Lebanese Kataeb Party (Phalanges) and the Palestinian Liberation Organisation, one or the other would set up a checkpoint, stopping cars – but instead of asking for IDs, someone would take out a tomato and ask you what it was. How you pronounced the name of the fruit would determine whether you were shot or spared. The Lebanese called it *banadoura*, and Palestinians said *bandora*.

Fail the shibboleth and, bang – *Allah yerhamak*.

A shibboleth is defined as a custom, principle or belief distinguishing a particular class or group of people. In the Bible (Judges 12:6), shibboleth was a test of speech applied by the men of Gilead to the Ephraimites who wished to cross the Jordan after being defeated. If they pronounced the word 'sibboleth', their dialectic variety of speech betrayed them.

One of the first things any group does when forming an identity is play with language. Whether the group consists of members of a police department, of university students, residents of a city, British expats in Cairo, or African Americans in the US South, they will change dialects, invent new words, introduce new meanings to them. Sometimes the change is to simplify communication: as an example, police having number codes for different crimes, doctors for procedures. Sometimes it's to stop others from understanding what you're saying – think spy codes, or a quarterback calling out plays in American football.

For the most part, however, groups create a new language to consolidate identities by increasing what the members of said group have in common and, just as importantly, by excluding others who do not belong. These shibboleths are the glue that bind. They make members feel at home within that identity.

I was surprised by my father's reaction when I first came out to him some forty years ago. He was hurt, but not terribly so. Let's just say that he had some inkling that I was not quite straight a while before I told him. I don't think he had too much of a problem with what I did sexually, so long as I did it in private. His concern was that I was choosing to live as a

queer man. Why couldn't I just get married like everyone else, give him grandchildren, and do whatever I want in my private life – fuck on the side, so to speak? Forget the moral aspect of what he wanted for a moment (he grew up in a patriarchal culture where a husband's cheating was not only accepted but expected). He was asking why I would choose to give up a dominant identity – say, Lebanese, heterosexual, etc. – and openly take on an oppressed, even despised one.

That question, in various guises, would follow me for quite a while. I started a gay soccer team in San Francisco in 1982, even though I'd also played on several straight teams most of my life. I was regularly asked by non-queers why I needed a 'special' team to play with. My response was always the same: that the fact that they couldn't see why I needed it was why I did. I wanted community. I needed friends who would get my jokes, and, true, I had gay friends, but queer players understood both my gay and soccer quips.

And, of course, we developed our own language, verbal and non.

I left Lebanon as a teenager at the beginning of the war. My first sexual encounters were outside the country. The first community I tried to belong to was in San Francisco. In the early days I kept my two lives, my two identities, separate. Though I returned to Beirut once or twice a year, even during the war, I never thought about meeting queers in the city while I was there, never thought of having sex either (didn't know what I was missing!). I spent most of my time with family. I was a queer boy in San Francisco and an Alameddine in Beirut. I was totally out and all that, just never thought about my queerness in Lebanon. That changed in the late nineties, when my first novel came out, and a number of Lebanese gay men and lesbians reached out.

When I attended my first Lebanese gay party in Beirut, I was flabbergasted. Not that there were so many gay Lebanese in one place – I knew of the gay bars, the dance clubs, the hammams. No, I was shocked because, at times during the party, I couldn't understand what they were saying. Our language and dialect were the same, but their use of certain words and phrases made no sense to me. I was an outsider among this group of gay men.

A handsome young man, wearing a turtleneck, leaned against a corridor wall. Another young man walked by, suddenly halted in pretend shock. His eyes travelled the entire length of the sweater, contorted his face in horror, and in a low, sibilant voice, he said, 'Yii, shou ṣān'a!' I was familiar with everything that came before the words. The mock disgust at fashion disasters is a gay rite of passage that crossed all cultures. But the insult, 'What a maid,' was foreign to me. I did not miss the racist or classist connotations, yet I felt exhilarated. If I wanted to belong, I needed to learn this new language.

The first time I had sex with a Lebanese man in Beirut was both the sweetest encounter and a disaster. We'd be fucking, and he'd say something romantic, and I'd ask him where that phrase came from (what can I say? I'm a writer). Worse, he'd say something sexual, and I would begin to giggle. We ended up spending the night in each other's arms, going over the various speech permutations of the Lebanese language of queers.

What you have in your hands is a lexicography of the language of queers across the Arab countries, a book of shibboleths.

Introduction

Marwan Kaabour

Fūfū. That was the first one I heard, or at least remember hearing. I must have been around five. It was said to me on the street, while I was walking back from the shop next to my grandmother's house in Beirut. I didn't know what it meant, but the boy who said it did not seem particularly pleased when the words left his lips. I didn't think much of it until it was said to me again at school, and then a few more times after that. What is *fūfū*, I wondered? I still didn't know what it meant, but I was starting to understand that it had to do with the way I walked or behaved.

How would I describe my mannerisms around that time? I was an overactive, theatrical, chatty little boy. It was a classic, textbook case of 'gay child'. At the time I thought that my theatricality was the result of being brought up in a household with two artists for parents. I wasn't like the other boys, clearly. I didn't question my otherness, and neither did my family – the outside world saw it differently. They saw me as a *fūfū*, which not only implied that I was different, but that this difference was upsetting, at least to some.

I remember another time when my mother and I ran into one of her relatives. She looked at me and said: 'He's so soft and pretty, almost like a girl.' For some reason that upset me more than the street bully who called me *fūfū*. It might be that my mother's relative explicitly said what the street bully had insinuated. I put two and two together and understood what *fūfū* meant. From that moment I began a long period of self-reflection, looking inwards at my behaviour and editing myself to avoid being labelled again. The insults didn't stop though, and they became ever more severe as I grew older. Compared to *ṭubjī*, *lūṭī* and *mukhannath*, *fūfū* was rather cute.

I am privileged, however. I got to live my childhood (almost) free from being made to feel ashamed about the way I am. Neither of my parents were religious or conservative. My father was a musician and my mother a painter, and their liberal attitudes were somewhat of an anomaly in the socially charged and conservative climate of post-war Lebanon. It's naive to assume that my upbringing meant that growing up queer was simple – it never is. But it did allow me space to view my queerness with curiosity, rather than festering shame. As I became more conscious of the way the world perceives me, I began to apply that same curiosity to the labels and insults used against me. What did it all mean? Why did those words have such an impact?

My fascination with philology was not born in that moment; it had been brewing for a while. I recall hours on end, sitting in the back seat of my parents' car, reading shop signs, ads and graffiti, and asking my mother and father what those words meant. With his immense knowledge of Arabic, my father would explain to me the meanings, context and even etymology of the words I saw. That seems to have stuck with me because language keeps making its way back to my life and work.

In my design practice, I often use text and typography as anchor points for my work. I am fascinated with the layered nuances and historical context that words hold, and how all that shapes and alters meaning. I get giddy when I learn about the origins of words. I nerd out on trying to understand slang and dialect, and the socio-political circumstances that brought those words into being. One of my favourite pastimes is to use words like playdough, shaping and twisting them into unexpected forms. It often ends up with me churning out puns and wordplay to my thoroughly unamused friends.

In September 2019, I launched Takweer, an online platform that archives and celebrates queer narratives in Arab history and pop culture. Inspired by clever word play between the Arabic *takweer*, meaning 'to create in the form a sphere', and the English 'queer', Takweer was born. By blending the two languages I had created a new word that meant 'to make queer' or to see the world through the queer Arab gaze.

Takweer was born out of frustration from seeing my queer Arab peers anchor their expression and understanding of their queerness within eurocentrism. This is not to say that queer people don't or can't share a universal understanding of their identity. With that said, the way queerness has been shaped over time, and the way it exists within different regions around the world, has historically taken many different routes that sometimes diverge. There is wealth in that divergence that must be looked at.

Another frustration was the lack of accessible resources around queerness within our region. Most books that I came across that dealt with the matter were written by non-Arabs, and in a foreign language. Many other resources were accessible only behind a paywall, and comprehensible only after deciphering the academic language they are written in. A small number of mainstream references to queerness existed, but were either references to 'vulgarities', a way to paddle moral outrage over 'sexual deviance', or to poke fun at queer-presenting people.

How could we challenge the narrative when we lacked accessible resources from our region?

Takweer aims to be the mediator. I scan through academic papers, newspaper articles, television programmes, films, music videos and social media, to 'excavate' and uncover queer narratives, however grand or fleeting. With every discovery, I design a bilingual Instagram post informed by as much research and context as possible to recontextualise the narrative with queerness in mind.

Within months of its launch, Takweer gained considerable traction among the queer Arab community and beyond. It dawned on me that I was inadvertently building an archive. As the page grew, so did my interactions with its followers, many of whom would provide input or new leads to explore. There was a wealth of knowledge that had been untapped, that had previously been relegated to footnotes or simply left out of history. I hoped Takweer

would become more than just an Instagram page and turn into a springboard from which new projects would arise. I hadn't realised that much of my research was inevitably bringing me back to language and what would eventually become *The Queer Arab Glossary.*

After seven wonderful years at my former design job at Barnbrook, I left in January 2020 to set up my own design practice and focus on Takweer. Two months later, the world stood still while trying to come to terms with the COVID-19 pandemic that was ravaging the globe. I suddenly found myself locked down at home, jobless and overwhelmed by the uncertainty of the future. It was during that time that I found solace in the work I do for Takweer, and that the glossary was born.

It all started with an Instagram story I'd shared on Takweer. I used the 'question' sticker to ask the pages' followers: 'What are the words or terms you're familiar with, in your own dialect, that are used to refer to queer people?' I originally envisioned using the submissions to create a typographic map of the region, based on the slang used to refer to queer people. I was expecting a few dozen answers, not the deluge of information that transpired. I then thought I would collate and publish these submitted terms in a glossary as a humble small booklet. But the more I repeated the exercise, the more submissions and suggestions I received. It quickly turned to hundreds of submissions, which began populating an extensive spreadsheet. It was the basis on which the glossary was developed.

The bulk of the collated 'raw data' came from Takweer's followers and their generous submissions. The information required further research to build a better understanding of each entry and its context. My positionality as a cisgendered queer Lebanese person from Beirut, living in London, limits the scope of how much I can develop this understanding on my own. I neither have access or automatic comprehension of all spoken Arabic dialects, nor can I claim that I know the slang of all the groups that fall under the queer umbrella.

I embarked on a two-year-long process of having one-to-one discussions with queer people from across the Arabic-speaking region. I made sure to speak to people from different parts of the same country, of different socio-economic classes, and those who identify with the broad gamut of the queer community. The discussions would happen via Zoom, email exchange, voice-note threads or in-person.

I asked the interviewees about terms they were familiar with and enquired about their meaning, context of usage and to whom these words are normally said. That same exercise would be repeated over and over again among members of the same community in order to confirm the meaning. If contradictory accounts were submitted, then I would conduct additional interviews to either confirm the multiplicity in meaning or provide consensus on one.

Every conversation enriched the research and provided much-needed nuance to the context of each entry. With that said, I am certain that some readers will disagree with some of the entries' definitions, or might offer contradictory ones. I welcome that and hope it can help enrich and expand the glossary further. No study of a similar nature can ever be conclusive; it can however pave the way for further research and more advanced analysis.

Compiling and researching *The Queer Arab Glossary* was an ambitious undertaking. Both

queerness and dialect are known to be in a constant state of flux and transformation, constantly evading limitation. To add another layer of complexity, there is no singular Arabic dialect, but countless iterations of spoken Arabic. 'Arab' and 'Arabic' are by no means a singular monolith. The Arabic language is diverse in its forms, as are the people who populate the Arab world.

What is often referred to as the 'Arab world' is a grouping of countries in Western Asia and North Africa, stretching from the Atlantic Ocean in the west to the Arabian Sea in the east, and from the Mediterranean Sea in the north to the Indian Ocean in the south east. Most people in this area are ethnically Arab, but there is also a vast population of other ethnic groups such as Amazigh, Kurds, Somalis and Nubians.

A primary factor that defines Arab people is the fact that they speak Arabic. The Arabic language exists in its classical form as Standard Arabic, as well as numerous dialectic variations spoken by the inhabitants of the region. Standard Arabic is formally taught in an academic context, and primarily used in formal communications such as newspapers and news reports, period dramas and formal speeches. It is seldom used as a means for informal communication, that is, you wouldn't hear people conversing in Standard Arabic on the street, only in dialect.

Spoken Arabic dialects vary massively, not only from one country to another, but from one small locality to its neighbour. The variations are based not just on accents or enunciations, but on significant changes in colloquial vocabulary. The latter is a window into the region's socio-political makeup. The words we speak today are witness to and the result of years of cultural changes, imperial rule, colonisation and soft power.

The prevalence of the Arabic language itself exists because of Arabisation, the sociological process of cultural change in which a non-Arab society becomes Arab. Arabisation occurred following the Muslim conquest of the Middle East and North Africa, as well as various nationalist policies towards non-Arab minorities. Despite the diminishing prevalence of the languages those minorities spoke, their impact on spoken Arabic dialects remains, such as Aramaic in Levantine dialects, Amazigh in Maghrebi or Kurdish in Iraqi.

Ancient political alliances and trade routes have also left their mark on spoken Arabic dialects. Egypt was part of the Roman Empire for seven centuries, and numerous Italian words remain in Egyptian dialect to this day. Most of the region was later under the Ottoman Empire for six centuries and the Turkish-Ottoman lexicon remains a fixture of Levantine dialects. More recent European colonisation and mandates have also imprinted our tongues, with Italian words making their way into spoken Libyan, or French entering spoken Lebanese and Syrian. In modern times, as American culture has swept through the world, many English words have been entering our daily vocabulary. This phenomenon will continue to shape and shift our language and vocabulary over time. Language is malleable and impressionable.

As is the case with the rest of the globe, the nation states that make up the Arab world came into being as a result of imperialism, colonialism and civil, regional and global wars. The states and political borders that ensued do not necessarily reflect the cultural homogeneity of the communities that live within these borders. Language and vocabulary do not acknowledge political borders, but rather travel freely and bleed across, visa-free.

When it came to deciding how to categorise the sections of the glossary, it would have seemed obvious to do so by country, but not necessarily the most natural way to proceed. For all the reasons outlined above, this glossary is divided by the six main Arabic dialects: Levantine, also called *Shami* (Palestine, Lebanon, Syria and Jordan); Iraqi; Gulf (Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates and Yemen); Egyptian; Sudanese; and Maghrebi (Libya, Algeria, Tunisia and Morocco).

I invite you to engross yourself in the glossary's entries, which run the full range of emotions: harrowing, peculiar, hilarious, shocking, saddening, joyful, sweet and sinister. Explore the outstanding creativity, wit, humour and sass that our community has utilised to create language that speaks to and is about us. Learn about the etymology of 'dirty' words that seem to have survived, unchanged, for centuries and that remain embedded in our language. But also engage with the entries that were designed to hurt us the most. Use them as an educational tool to understand how our communities perceive us, and the prejudices that exist at its core.

While reading through the glossary, you might notice patterns and themes that run across several dialectic sections. Some themes are expected – like words of kinship to connote a queer family connection – but others are rather curious. Why are there so many words relating to worms? Why do the names of animals and modes of transport keep coming up? Perhaps one of the most obvious things to note is the massive imbalance between the many words relating to queer men versus the few relating to queer women, whether derogatory or endearing. This phenomenon persists despite queer women having participated equally in the submission and interview stages of the research.

The gender imbalance and inequality that patriarchy have fostered in the Arab world extends to the queer Arab community and the language surrounding it. While there are dozens of ways to refer to queer men and their sexuality, there are only a handful of words to do so for queer women. The misogyny embedded in our language limits the boundaries in which women are able to speak about their bodies, sexualities and queerness. The words that do exist mostly take agency away from queer women and bring it back to the man. This is effected by using words implying that women who are queer and/or are not feminine-presenting are somehow 'manly' – such as *mistarjila* (like a man; Levantine) or *boya* (feminisation of boy; Gulf). Or it is achieved through referencing queer women's sex lives by using tropes popularised by mostly heterosexual men, such as *laḥḥāsa* (licker; Iraqi) or *ḥakkāka* (rubber; Maghrebi).

Despite it being particular to the queer community, the entries of *The Queer Arab Glossary* reflect the societies we live in and the linguistic landscape attached to them. The observations mentioned above are natural consequences of this landscape. It is my hope that this glossary encourages a conversation that leads to the innovation of new queer slang that fills in the gaps. I imagine an updated version of the glossary in the future with a wealth of entries relating to queer women, trans people and everyone else who presides under the queer umbrella.

And despite it being specific to the Arabic-speaking region, *The Queer Arab Glossary* presents a universal framework. It can be applied to any grouping of communities around the world, who share dialect and slang.

The six dialectic sections that make up *The Queer Arab Glossary* are the backbone of this volume. The entries were compiled, written and researched bilingually. The research process was synonymous with the way most Arabic-speaking youth code-switch, and so it was natural to present the outcome in both Arabic and English. The 330 entries paint a thorough picture of the philological environment that queer Arabs exist in, but it was crucial to bring the glossary to life both in text and image. I worked closely with Suneela Mubayi whose vast knowledge of the Arabic language and its history helped articulate the historical, social and linguistic depths the entries held.

Some entries showcase the exciting elasticity of the Arabic language, while others utilise text to paint a picture. From the outset of the project, I was certain the book demanded an illustrative element to bring the visual entries to life. The personalities and scenes those terms describe give us a unique opportunity to introduce a sense of mythology into our queer imaginary. Can we envisage how the Levantine *'aqraba* or the Egyptian *nagafa* look like? Those words might have negative connotations, but Haitham Haddad's masterful illustrations are able to inject a much-needed dose of joy, humour and the macabre. For example, *dūdakī* is an Iraqi pejorative term, which means 'riddled with worms'. Haitham's visualisation of the *dūdakī* is a confident and sassy medusa-like mythological character, with living worms, rather than snakes, as hair. Despite what the terms suggest, the queerness of the visualised characters does not weigh them down, but rather lifts them up.

The other crucial undertaking was to situate and contextualise the glossary in today's world. I turned to eight of the region's key thinkers, artists, researchers and writers, and asked them to create essays that engage with the glossary. Based on their area of interest and expertise, they each presented an illuminating text that brings much-needed depth to the project.

Hamed Sinno and Saqer AlMarri's texts both centre around the oldest and most frequently used terms to refer to queer people in Arabic: *Mukhannath*. Hamed's essay *ANCESTRIES* is research poetry exploring their personal investment in the lineage of the *Mukhannathun*, and the way that history bridged their imagined alienation from brownness. Saqer's text *A Rich Constellation of Identities* explores the associated historical identities in Arab history of the terms *khuntha*, *mukhannath* and *khanith*, along with their linguistic characteristics and literary uses.

From the linguistic to the feminine and feminist space of Mejdulene Bernard Shomali's *Living in the Ellipses*, which explores the space between the named and unnamed in speaking about queer women and femininity. Rana Issa's *A Dance of Gossip* imagines a 'gossip session' between queer, non-confirming and trans people from (real and imagined) Arab history and pop culture. The attendees discuss their sex lives and sexuality in ways that transcend the kind of language usually attributed to queer women. Their conversation rectifies the considerable linguistic gap around queer women as seen in the glossary.

Gossip, rumours, whispers, folktales, legends and myths are cited in Sophie Chamas' *A Pedagogy of Rumours* as tools to build a queer Arab sense of self and a language. Sophie's text reflects on the role that a speculative engagement with the past, present and future of queer Arabness plays in the development of both a queer Arab lexicon.

Adam HajYahia's text *Are You a Pan-Arab Nationalist or Just a Man Who Sleeps With Men?* examines the political relationship between Palestinian sexuality and Zionist settler colonisation. Adam's text demonstrates how Palestinian sexuality has been a central object in formulating a colonial ideology that others Palestinians for being sexually 'deviant' at times, and 'repressed' at others.

Nisrine Chaer's *Terteeb, Bahdaleh, Tha'afeh and Crisscrossing Transness* turns to the story of two trans refugees in Lebanon to account for how transness and the terminology around it exceeds the contours of prevailing gender and sexuality, and how respectability operates and is deployed by trans refugees, both in the public space and the humanitarian space.

Finally, we conclude with Abdellah Taïa's *An Effeminate Moroccan*, a moving personal account from the writer's childhood. Abdellah recounts the words, sounds and images that coloured his childhood as a young effeminate boy growing up in a socially conservative Salé, and the way those elements shaped his understanding of his queer identity.

This glossary constitutes an extensive snap-shot of the linguistic landscape of queerness in the Arabic-speaking region. The entries reach out into the ancient as well as the recent past, but predominantly survey the language of today. They encapsulate the lexicon of the queer Arab community in all of its differences, particularities and quirks.

When the language we inherit does not equip us with the tools to speak about ourselves, we create our own. Queer slang is a way to identify other members of our community, it is an expression of social recognition and a form of protest. Slang allows us to say things conventional words and phrases are incapable of expressing; it fills the gaps. As our understanding of our queerness develops, alongside cultural and socio-political changes that will ultimately ensue, queers will innovate new slang on the daily. As exciting as the prospect of new queer slang is, it is imperative to document and conserve slang of today and whatever we can salvage from the past.

We must conserve memory. It is evidence of our existence, but also knowledge for later generations to learn from. It is no surprise that archives and memory are constantly under attack. In 2023 alone, Lebanon's National News Agency's photo archive was stolen by unknown assailants, while the Israeli Zionist occupation forces destroyed Gaza's 'Central Archives', which contained thousands of historical documents dating back more than 150 years. Insidious attacks on memory allow those who control the narrative to not only shape the socio-political discourse of today, but to rewrite and reshape the past as well.

In the face of continuous marginalisation and silencing – as well as looming challenges by artificial intelligence, which might further blur the line between fact and fiction – it is imperative we conserve our stories, images, culture and language.

As an umbrella platform, Takweer, and this book as its first realised project, aims to research, explore, archive and celebrate queer narratives in the region's history and popular culture. Takweer presents a challenge to the hegemonic cultural and socio-political discourse of our region, by introducing a queer, feminist and progressive reading of the past and present.

In the clearest and simplest terms, this book debunks the egregious myth, adopted by many conservative elements of our own

communities, that queerness is an imported Western or bourgeois concept. In the words of not only our queer siblings and allies, but also our bullies, our active presence across the region is documented throughout the decades and centuries. We have always been here, despite the varying nomenclature.

This book also debunks the ludicrous myth, adopted by misinformed Westerners with underlying Islamophobic sentiments, that the people of this region are inherently homophobic and backwards, unable to make space for or to embrace queer people. Not only do queers exist in every section and every stratum of this region, but we have been talking about it for centuries now. This is not to undermine the many challenges marginalised communities in our region face, but rather it is a defiant proclamation of wanting to understand these challenges and resolve them with our kin, and not via a parachuted saviour.

As queer elders pass, a great wealth of knowledge and wisdom passes too. For young queers, it might be a lifelong challenge to navigate the murky and treacherous waters of understanding not only themselves, but how they exist within a community and society. That challenge may sometimes be all-encompassing, and even lethal. Perhaps a project like this book might help pass on the knowledge and facilitate understanding. It allows for young queer people to have a footing firmly fixed in the ancestral past, a more nuanced understanding of today and the tools to help navigate the uncertain future.

Levantine Dialects

✳

لهجات بلاد الشام

Jordan
الأردن
(JO)

Lebanon
لبنان
(LB)

Palestine
فلسطين
(PS)

Syria
سوريا
(SY)

Ukht Rijāl
أخت رجال

(LB) (SY)

'Sister to men', i.e. manlike. Refers to a 'strong' girl with a masculine appearance and / or tough mannerisms that emulate normative masculine gender expression.

✳

فتاة ذات مظهر رجولي و / أو سلوكيات قد تتصف بالخشونة أو القسوة تشبهًا بالأداء الذكوري النمطي.

Ukhtī
أختي

(LB)

'Sister'; term of kinship used to refer to a friend, and imply a sense of sisterhood.

✳

مصطلح تحبب يدلّ على الشعور بالقرابة من صديق.ة كويري.ة حدّ التآخي.

Enfant / Anfona
أنفون.ة

(LB) (SY)

Arabisation of of the French enfant (child); refers to a younger gay man; twink.

✳

تعريب الكلمة الفرنسية '*enfant*' أي طفل؛ تدلّ على رجل مثلي 'ناعم' صغير السنّ.

Idlibī
إدلبي

(SY)

'From Idlib', a city in north-west Syria that has a reputation of being full of gay men. Synonymous with 'gay' among Syrians.

✳

نسبة لمدينة إدلب في شمال غرب سوريا، والاعتقاد السائد بوفرة الرجال المثليين فيها، فأصبحت مرادفة لشخص مثلي الجنس.

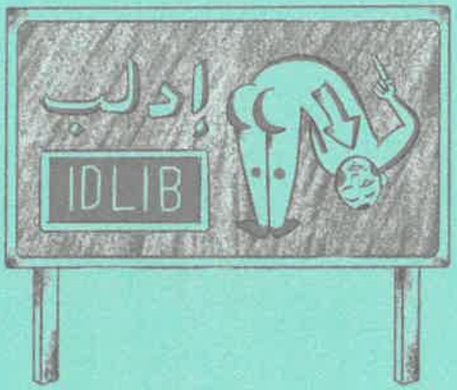
Iqlib Inta fī Idlib
إقلب أنت في إدلب

(SY)

'Bend over, you're now in Idlib.' A tongue-in-cheek saying, referring to the sexual promiscuity of the gay men in the city.

✳

(انظروا المادة أعلاه) عبارة مداعبة تدلّ على إقبال المثليين في إدلب على ممارسة الجنس عند أي فرصة.



Immī / Immé
إمي

(LB)

Arabic for 'Mum'. Endearing terms of kinship used to refer to a queer matriarch.

✳

مصطلح تحبب يشير إلى شخص يتخذ دور الأمّ في تشكّل عائلي كويري.

Bi-l-jaww / Min al-jaww
بالجوّ/من الجوّ

(LB) (SY)

Someone who is 'in / from the scene', i.e. the gay scene. Used among members of the queer community.

✳

تشير إلى شخص يبدو وكأنه ينتمي إلى مجتمع الميم، وتستخدم بين أعضاء هذا المجتمع.

Birūḥ
بروح

(PS)

'He goes', i.e. after men; gay.

*

'يذهب' أي يلاحق الرجال، أي مثلي.

Bot'aj
بُطعج

(PS)

'Bender': one who is willing to bend over during sex with men.

*

الرجل المستعدّ 'ليوطّي' أي ينحني جسده للوضعية الجنسية.

Ballā'a
بلّاعة

(PS)

'Mouth of a drain', i.e. someone who swallows; used refer to men performing fellatio on other men.

*

من يبتلع. تشير إلى الرجال الذين يمارسون الجنس الفموي مع رجال آخرين بكثرة.

Ballī'/Ballā' Ayr
بلّيع/بلّاع أير

(PS)

'Cock swallower'. *Ayr* is phallus in classical Arabic and Levantine dialects. Men who frequently perform fellatio.

*

'الأير' تعني القضيب في اللهجة الشامية والفصحى القديمة، وهذا المصطلح يشير إلى رجل مثلي يمارس الجنس الفموي مع رجال آخرين بكثرة.

Bintāk / Mintāk
بِنتاك/مِنتاك

(JO) (LB) (PS) (SY)

From 'nīk', colloquial word for fucking (from classical Arabic), used in French as the verb *niker*; bottom in gay sex; gay.

*

مشتقة من نيك، الكلمة الفصيحة القديمة لممارسة الجنس (الإيلاجي) والتي تُستعمل في اللهجة الشامية؛ انتقلت إلى الفرنسية *Niker*؛ الشخص الذي يأخذ الدور السالب في الجنس المثلي؛ مثلي.

Bintī
بنتي

(LB)

'Daughter'. Term of endearment to express kinship towards a younger queer person.

*

مصطلح للتعبير عن مشاعر الحنان تجاه شخص كويري.ة أصغر سنًا وكأنه هناك صلة رحم بينهما.

Bannūtī
بنّوتي

(JO) (LB) (PS) (SY)

'Girly', 'sissy'; an effeminate man according to prevailing social norms.

*

رجل يتسم بسلوكيات أنثوية بحسب الأنماط السائدة.

Bot'aj

Botmah
بوتمة

(JO) (PS)

Arabisation and feminisation of 'bottom', to denote the bottom in gay sex.

*

تعريب وتأنيث كلمة *bottom*، للدلالة على الشخص الذي يتخذ دور السالب في الجنس المثلي.

Boklo Min Warā / Byākul Min Ṭīzo / Birūḥ Min Warā
بوكلو من ورا/ بياكل من طيزو/ بروح من ورا

(PS)

'Eats from his ass' / 'goes from behind': someone who is the bottom in gay sex.

*

تدلّ على الرجل الذي 'يأكله/يذهب من مؤخرته/الوراء' أي يرغب في اتخاد دور 'السالب' في الجنس المثلي.

Byāklo/Byoklo
بياكلو/بوكلو

(JO) (LB) (PS) (SY)

'He eats it': cocksucker, gay.

*

تدلّ على رجل مثلي 'ياكل' أي يمصّ القضيب.

Pédé
بيدي

(LB)

Derogatory French word for gay or 'faggot', abbreviated from *pederast*, the Greek term for a man with a younger, adolescent boy lover. Common in Arabic-speaking countries that were colonised by France.

*

كلمة فرنسية لتحقير شاب مثلي، اختصار لكلمة *pederast* المشتقّة من الإغريقية للشيخ الذي يتخذ غلامًا عشيقًا له. شائعة في البلدان الناطقة بالعربية التي خضعت للاستعمار الفرنسي.

Taba' Wlād
تَبَع أولاد

(JO)

'He's into boys': subtle way to refer to a gay person: often refers to the top: may carry connotations of paedophilia.

*

تلميح يدلّ على شخص مثلي الجنس ، غالبًا ما إلى الشخص 'الموجب' في ممارسة الجنس المثلي؛ قد يحمل على أنه متحرش بالقاصرين.

Ḥabbāba
حبَابة

(LB)

Derived from *ḥubb* (love), but used more to denote someone sweet or nice ('likeable') in local slang: term used amongst women in Tripoli (north Lebanon) as code for a woman who has intimate relations with other women: more widely used in the first half of the 20th century. A *ḥabbāba* could be identified by other ḥabbābāt by wearing a neck scarf knotted on the side.

*

تدلّ بلهجات بلاد الشام على شخص ودود ولطيف المعشر؛ كناية عن امرأة تقيم علاقات حميمية مع نساء أخريات كانت شائعة (بصيغة المؤنث) بين النساء في طرابلس الشرق في شمال لبنان في النصف الأول من القرن العشرين؛ كانت الحبابة تُعرف لدى قريناتها بارتداء منديل معقود على أحد جانبيَ الرقبة.

Ḥasan Ṣabī
حسن صبي

(JO) (LB) (PS) (SY)

Tomboy, a girl who dresses or acts manly according to prevailing social norms, may suggest she is lesbian but not per se.

*

فتاة ذات طابع أو سلوكيات متشبهة بالذكور بحسب الأنماط الاجتماعية السائدة ما قد يوحي بأنها مثلية ولكن ليس بالضرورة.

بيَاكُل مِن طيزُه

Byākul min ṭīzo

Khaṣṣo
خَصّو

(LB)

'Pertinent to': a term indicating that a man 'pertains to the gay community'. Used to avoid explicitly using the term 'gay'.

*

مصطلح يشير إلى أن الرجل 'معنيّ بالأمر' أي أنه ينتمي إلى مجتمع المثليين. تُستخدم بين أعضاء مجتمع الميم لتجنب المجاهرة.

Khalantha
خَلَنْثَة

(PS)

A flamboyant man with mannerisms considered effeminate according to prevailing social norms.

*

رجل يتباهى بسلوكيات تُعدّ أنثوية بحسب الأنماط الاجتماعية السائدة.

Khunja'a
خُنْجَعَة

(PS)

Deliberately effeminate, coy.

*

من يتشبّه بالنساء عمدًا، دلوع.

Khawal
خَوَل

(JO)

The *khawal* was a traditional native male dancer in Egypt cross-dressed in feminine attire and was popular up until the late 18th and early 19th centuries. The word is now used like "faggot," to refer offensively to anyone suspected of being effeminate and/or gay. Mostly used in Egypt but also in other Arabic-speaking countries.

كان الخول راقصًا شعبيًا في مصر يرتدي ملابس نسائية، وحظي بشعبية كبيرة حتى أواخر القرن الثامن عشر وبداية القرن التاسع عشر. تستخدم الكلمة غالبًا في مصر وأيضًا في بلدان أخرى الآن لتحقير كل من يُشتبه بأنه مثلي أو له طابع أنثوي أو سلوكيات أنثوية.

Khīkha
خيخة

(JO) (LB)

Refers to a 'weaker' man; one whose gender presentation does not conform to masculinity; often used to describe men who have a 'soft' demeanour.

*

تدلّ على رجل 'ضعيف' أي من لا يتوافق أداءه الجندري مع الذكورة المعيارية. غالبًا ما تستخدم لوصف الرجال الذين لديهم سلوكيات 'ناعمة'.

Dakar
دَكَر

(JO) (LB) (PS) (SY)

'Male'; Stud; A hypermasculine gay man, as per prevailing social norms, considered an extremely virile top by other gay men

*

رجل مثلي يبالغ في الأداء الجندري الرجولي بحسب الأنماط الاجتماعية السائدة مما يجعله جذّابًا في أوساط المثليين الذين يرونه فحلًا دومًا يتخذ دور الموجب في العلاقة الجنسية.

Dallū'
دَلّوع

(JO) (LB)

From *dala* 'acting spoiled', a tease; someone who has an effeminate demeanour as per prevailing norms, i.e. gay.

*

متراخ، مايص، تدلّ على الرجال والفتيان ذوي طابع أو سلوكيات أنثوية بحسب الأنماط السائدة، الأمر الذي يوحي بأنه مثلي.

Zilimtī/Zilimtuh
زِلمتي/زلمتو

(JO)

'My man'/'his man', from *zalamē* (man/guy in Levantine dialect): refers to a man who is protective of or dominant over another, with the latter being perceived as weaker or younger; often has power dynamics similar to those between men in prison.

*

من 'زَلَمة' الكلمة العامية لرجل؛ تدلّ على الرجل الذي يتحامى عن رجلًا آخر و/أو يتسلط عليه عاطفيًا أو جنسيًا، بناء على أن الأخير أصغر سنًا أو يُنظر له كأضعف؛ غالبًا ما تتسم هذه العلاقة بديناميات عاطفية أو جنسية تشبه علاقات الهيمنة أو الخضوع بين السجناء.

Zalamiyya
زَلَمِيّة

(SY)

'Guy-ish': a tomboyish girl who looks and/or acts like a *zalame* (see *zilmtī*, above).

*

فتاة تتشبه بالزّلام (انظروا مادة زلمتي أعلاه)، أي ذات طابع و/أو مظهر وسلوكيات ذكورية.

Zay al-Banāt
زيّ البنات

(JO)

'Like a girl': effeminate.

*

كالبنات، أي له سلوكيات أنثوية.

Sālib
سالب

(SY)

'Negative'; i.e. a bottom, the passive partner or the one who is penetrated in gay sex.

*

الشخص الذي يُولج به في الجنس المثلي.

Sāyiṭ
سايط

(PS)

'Weak, diluted': normally used for watered-down or weak coffee, i.e. not strong and rough the way males are supposed to be.

*

غير جامد، تستخدم عادة للقهوة المخففة بالماء والتي فقدت مفعولها وطعمتها، أي غير قوي وفاقد القسوة والخشونة كما يُفترض أن يكون الذكر.

Suḥāqiyya
سُحاقِيّة

(JO)

'Grinder': classical Arabic term for lesbian.

*

من تساحق؛ الكلمة الفصحى القديمة للإمرأة المثلية.

Sīn
سين

(SY)

Used among queer men to refer to someone who is attractive.

*

تُستخدم بين الرجال المثليين لتدل على شخص جذاب.

Shādh.a, pl. Shawādh
شاذ.ة، ج. شواذ

(JO) (LB) (PS) (SY)

'Deviant', i.e. deviant from the (sexual) norm. Now considered offensive by many; formerly the 'neutral' medical/scientific term in official discourse for gay before the spread of *mithlī* (same-orientated).

*

مصطلح تحقيري لشخص مثلي الجنس 'يشذّ' عن القاعدة، كونه لا ينجذب إلى الجنس الآخر. كان هذا هو المصطلح العلمي/الطبي 'المحايد' المعتمد في الأدبيات الرسمية قبل شيوع 'مثلي'.

Sharshūḥ.a

شرشوح.ة

(LB)

'Shameless'/'crass': used among gay men as a dismissive term to refer to someone who is perceived as impolite, has no sense of social grace, likes to make a spectacle.

*

شخص يُعتبر غير مهذّب، لا يستحي من السلوك الفضائحي. عبارة استهجان بين الرجال المثليين.

Shakar

شكر

(LB) (PS)

Colloquial word to refer to anyone whose gender presentation is perceived as ambiguous, androgynous or outside the binary, whether they are trans, non-binary, intersex etc. Often heard as part of the expression *shakar bakar lā unthā walā dhakar* ('shakar bakar, neither male nor female') as a way of describing someone who is gender ambiguous as being 'neither here nor there' which may have (partly) been popularized through a song by Syro-Lebanese pop star George Wassouf. May be used playfully among queers.

*

كلمة تحقيرية تُطلق على كل شخص يمتلك صفات أنثوية وذكورية في الوقت ذاته، أو يؤدي أداءًا جندريا مبهمًا أو خارج ثنائية الذكر/الأنثى، سواءًا أكان عابر.ة أم لامعيارية أم خُنثى وغيره. تُسمع كثيرًا ضمن عبارة: 'شكر بكر لا أنثى ولا ذكر' التي تشير إلى ذوي الأداء الجندري المبهم بصفتهم 'لا معلّقين ولا مطلّقين' والتي قد تكون اشتهرت (جزئيا على الأقل) جراء ورودها في أغنية للمطرب السوري-اللبناني الشعبي جورج وسوف. قد تُستعمل الكلمة بين الكويريين.ات من باب المداعبة.

Shaykha

شيخة

(LB)

Used by lesbians as a term of respect for an older lesbian of high regard.

*

لقب إجلال تطلقها المثليات على إمرأة مثلية بالغة السن، تحظى بالتقدير والهيبة.

Shīmayl/Shīmayla

شيميل/شيميلة

(LB) (SY)

Arabisation of 'shemale': derogatory term referring to trans women as deformed men; the term is also used by trans women among each other despite its offensive connotation.

*

تعريب كلمة *shemale*، مصطلح تحقيري للنساء العابرات بوصفهن ذكورًا ممسوخين لنساء. تطلقها العابرات على بعضهن البعض رغم دلالتها المسيئة.

Ṣān'a

صانعة

(LB)

Maid in local dialect: a classist term referring to domestic workers who now are usually migrant women of colour from Africa and South / Southeast Asia, thus also giving it racial overtones in the present day. Used amongst queer men to refer to someone who is unattractive.

*

صاحبة الصنعة؛ تماثل 'خدّامة' باللهجة المحلية؛ عبارة ذات صبغة طبقية تدلّ على العاملة في الخدمة المنزلية وأغلبهن اليوم مهاجرات مستقدمات إمّا من إفريقيا وإمّا جنوب/جنوب شرق آسيا ما أضفى على الكلمة صبغة عنصرية أيضًا؛ تُتداول بين الرجال المثليين/الكويريين للاستقباح أحدهم لا يعتبرونه جذّابًا.

شيخة

Shaykha

طنط مركب جنط

Ṭanṭ mrakkib janṭ

Ḍabi'/Ḍab'a

ضبع.ة

(SY)

Arabic for 'hyena'; refers to a man or woman who is sexually insatiable. Hyenas cannot hunt, so they target the protruding body parts of animals, like testicles and tails.

*

تدلّ على شخص شبق لا تـ.يشبع من الجنس. لا تستطيع الضباع الصيد، لذلك تستهدف أعضاء الجسم الناتئة لدى الحيوان كالخصيتين أو الذيل.

Ṭubjī pl. Ṭabaj/Ṭabājna

طُبجي، ج. طَبَج/طَباجنة

(LB) (SY)

'Gay'/'faggot'; originates from Turkish. *Top* means 'cannon' in Turkish, and is colloquially used to refer to a gay person. The attached suffix *-ci* denotes a person associated with a particular thing or profession named by the noun, so *topçi* or 'cannon-firer', i.e. someone (usually a man) who engages in gay sex.

*

كلمة تحقيرية من أصل تركي لرجل مثلي تعادل 'لوطي': طوپ يعني مدفع، كما أصبحت تدلّ على المثلية بالتركية المعاصرة، واللاحقة 'جي' (أو چي) بالتركية تنسب الفاعل لما سبقها (أي صاحب الشيء أو العمل أو المهنة مثل 'بتاع' أو 'تبع' بالعربية المحكية)، فالطبجي هو حرفيًا المسؤول عن ضرب المدفع، واقتبست الكلمة لتدلّ على كل شخص (عادة رجل) يمارس الجنس المثلي.

Ṭafya

طَفيَة

(SY)

Derived from the same root as to extinguish, put out, switch off; used among queer men to refer to someone who is unattractive.

مشتقّة من الإطفاء؛ تستخدم بين الرجال المثليين للإشارة إلى شخص غير جذاب.

Ṭanṭ Mrakkib Janṭ

طَنط مركّب جَنط

(JO)

'A pansy with a rim installed' (see *tante* below). *Jante* is French for a wheel's rim. Used for a *tante* with a large behind.

*

Jante هي كلمة فرنسية لحافّة العجلة. *Tante* هي كلمة فرنسية للعمّة أو لمخاطبة امرأة مسنّة بطريقة محترمة. يدلّ هذا المصطلح على رجل مثلي أو ذو طابع أنثوي لديه مؤخرة كبيرة.

Ṭanṭe/Ṭanṭina/Ṭanṭa

طَنط/طَنطينا/طَنطة

(JO) (LB) (PS) (SY)

French for aunt, or elderly and well-respected woman. Can also mean queen, effeminate, pansy or queen, or just an elderly gay man.

*

كلمة فرنسية تعني عمّة، تُستخدم لمخاطبة امرأة مسنة باحترام. تدلّ على شاب ذو طابع أو سلوكيات أنثوية. قد تدلّ أيضًا على رجل مثلي متقدم بالعمر.

Ṭawwāsha

طوّاشة

(PS)

Derived from *ṭā'ish*, i.e. reckless, as in a man who doesn't think before acting; used to refer to a gay man on the basis that he has gone astray in his life choices.

*

مشتقّة من كلمة طائش أي متهور، يتصرّف بدون تأنٍّ؛ يتخذ خيارات بدون الإحاطة والاطلاع اللازمين، تدلّ على شاب مثلي على اعتبار أنه قد ضلّ الطريق عن الاستقامة في خياراته.

ʿAqraba
عقربة

(LB) (SY)

Very effeminate gay man; trans woman. Arabic for 'scorpion' – refers to a (cisgender or trans) woman who tries to 'steal' a gay man's partner.

*

رجل مثلي الجنس مفرط التأنث في مظهره أو سلوكياته؛ امرأة عابرة؛ امرأة (عابرة أو متوافقة الجندر) تحاول أن تراود حبيب رجل مثلي عن نفسه.

Fāriṭ
فارط

(SY)

'Scattered': a man who is not 'put together'. Someone who is soft; swaying; loose; gay.

*

شخص غير متماسك كأنه جسم متاهلك؛ لا يتحدث بحزم؛ مترنّح؛ متراخٍ؛ مثلي الجنس.

Fāfī/Fīfo/Fūfū
فافي/فيفو/فوفو

(JO) (LB) (PS)

Effeminate, coy, sissy, gay.

*

ذو طابع أنثوي، مخنث، ناعم أو دلّوع، أي مثلي.

Family
فاميلي

(LB)

Refers to the queer 'family', anyone part of a set of queers who consider each other to be family.

*

'عائلة' بالإنكليزية؛ أي من ينتمي إلى تشكيلة كويرية يعتبر أفرادها بعضهم البعض بمنزلة القرابة.

Coccinelle/Cocs
كوكسينيل/كوكس

(PS)

Jacqueline Charlotte Dufresnoy, better known by her stage name *Coccinelle* (French for ladybird), was a French actress, entertainer and singer. She was transgender, and was the first widely publicised post-war gender reassignment case in Europe. In Israeli slang, the word *coccinelle* is used as a synonym for transgender, often derogatorily. The word is also common among Palestinian citizens of Israel, particularly older trans women who use the term to refer to each other.

*

إحالة إلى جاكلين شارلوت دوفرسنُوي، المعروفة بلقبها المسرحي كوكسينيل (دعسوقة بالفرنسية)، كانت ممثلة وفنانة ومغنية فرنسية عابرة في القرن العشرين، وكانت قضية عبورها أول قضية من نوعها تنتشر على نطاق واسع بعد الحرب العالمية الثانية في أوروبا. في العبرية المحكية، تُستخدم كلمة كوكسينيل كمرادف لعابري وعابرات الهوية الجندرية، غالبًا بقصد الازدراء. الكلمة شائعة أيضًا بين فلسطينيي الداخل (الذين يسكنون المناطق المحتلّة عام ١٩٤٨، أي داخل دولة إسرائيل) وخاصة النساء العابرات الأكثر تقدمًا في السن اللواتي يستخدمن المصطلح للإشارة إلى بعضهن البعض.

Lāzmo Shadd Barāghī
لازمه شدّ براغي

(SY)

'His screws need tightening': someone who is swaying; loose; gay. Based on the perception that gay men sway while walking and gesticulate, as if screws are flying from their arms.

*

شاب متراخٍ، ذو سلوكيات ناعمة، غير متماسك أو متراخي، أي مثلي. قد يعود أصل العبارة إلى التصور بأن المثليين يتمايلون أثناء المشي و'يشوبرون' بأيديهم بكثرة وكأنه هناك براغي تتطاير من أذرعهم.

عَقرَبة

ʿAqraba

لازمه شد براغي

Lāzmo shadd barāghī

Lesbit
لزبيت

PS

Arabisation of the Hebrew term for lesbian (referring to the island of Lesbos, home of Greek poet Sappho, known for her erotic poetry about women). Common among Palestinians inside the 1948-occupied territories, owing to the proliferation of Hebrew in their everyday life within Israel.

*

كلمه عبرية لامرأة مثلية (والتي تُنسب إلى جزيرة لزبوس اليونانية، موطن الشاعرة الإغريقية القديمة سافو التي عُرفت بقصائدها الغزلية في النساء)، شائعة بين فلسطينيي الداخل (الذين يسكنون المناطق المحتلّة عام ١٩٤٨) من جراء شيوع المصطلحات العبرية بينهم بسبب عيشهم داخل دولة إسرائيل.

Limm el-Rubuʿ
لِمّ الرُبع

LB

'Pick up the quarter,' i.e. bend over. A sarcastic phrase used in Tripoli (north Lebanon), as a backhanded jibe at the sexual promiscuity of the city's gay men.

*

لأمر أحدهم أن ينحني لالتقاط قطعة الربع ليرة النقدية؛ عبارة ساخرة شائعة في طرابلس الشرق للتلميح باستهزاء إلى النشاط الجنسي المكثف لدى الرجال المثليين فيها.

Lūṭī, pl. Lawaṭ/Lawayṭah
لوطي، ج. لَوط/لوايطة

JO LB PS SY

Derogatory term to refer to a gay man; 'faggot'. A descendant of the biblical character Lot (prophet Lot in Islam). Used in both popular and religious contexts.

*

من سلالة شخصية لوط التوراتية، أو النبي لوط في الإسلام. مصطلح ازدرائي يدلّ على رجل مثلي. تُستخدم في سياق شعبي وكذلك ديني/فقهي.

Mʿaddaz
مأدَز

PS

Has AIDS; in reference to the fallacy that gay men are riddled with disease.

*

مصاب بمرض الأيدز (نقص المناعة المكتسبة) في إشارة إلى المغالطة الشائعة والقائلة بأن غالبية الرجال المثليين مصابين بالأمراض المنقولة جنسيًا.

Muʿannath/Mʿannat
مؤنّث/مأنّت

LB

'Female'/'feminine'; a guy who looks and/or acts effeminate, so is considered to be gay for being deficient in manliness.

*

شاب يتشبه بالإناث في مظهره أو/و سلوكه، فيُعتبر مثليًا لكونه ناقص الرجولة.

Māyiṣ
مايص

JO

A colloquial word referring to a person who moves slowly or who is considered to be coy, used to refer to effeminate men.

*

كلمة عامية تشير إلى شخص يتحرك ببطء أو بغنج، أو يعتبر دلوع، تدلّ على الشباب الناعمين ذوي طابع أنثوي.

Māyiʿ
مايع/مائع

LB PS SY

'Liquified' or 'swaying'; denotes a weak or spoiled-acting person; effeminate.

*

ذائب أو سائل، غير جامد؛ تدلّ على رجل ضعيف البنية أو مدلّع، و/أو ذو طابع أنثوي.

Mutashabbiha Bi-l-Rijāl
متشبهة بالرجال

(JO)

'She who emulates men': has masculine or sometimes even misogynist mannerisms; tomboy.

*

فتاة ذات طابع أو سلوكيات رجولية وأحيانًا حتى ذكورية.

Majdī w Wajdī
مجدي ووجدي

(LB)

Name of two 'gay' characters from Lebanese comedy sketch show *Ma fi Metlo*. The characters presented an exaggerated and clichéd representation of effeminate gay men. The characters' portrayal was derogatory and damaging, and led to the normalisation and proliferation of making fun of gay men.

*

ثنائي مثلي من برنامج كوميدي لبناني 'ما في متلو'. قدمت إسكتشات الثنائي تمثيلا مبالغا فيه ومبتذلا لشخصيتين مثليتين. وجد الكثيرون أن تصويرهم مهين ومضر. أدى هذا البرنامج إلى تطبيع وانتشار السخرية من الرجال المثليين.

Mukhannath/Khanīth
مخنَّث/خنيث

(JO) (LB) (PS) (SY)

Widespread across the Arab world: used today for someone transgender, or considered effeminate, sissy, androgynous; in pre-modern writings on sexuality in Arabic, the term refers to those exhibiting behaviour that would today lead them to be called transvestites, and who made a living off music; or those who would have physical sex characteristics that we would today call intersex. For further details, refer to Saqer Almarri's text.

مشتقّة من الخنوثة؛ مصطلح واسع الانتشار في المنطقة العربية يدلّ على شاب ذو طابع أو سلوكيات أنثوية، ناعم و/أو دلوع؛ من ي.تمتلك صفات أنثوية وذكورية في الوقت ذاته، بينجنسي.ة، عابر.ة الجنس. ترد العبارة في الأدبيات العربية القديمة حول الجنسانية لتدلّ على فتيان يتشبهون بالنساء في مظهرهم وسلوكهم ويعتاشون من الغناء والرقص. للمزيد من التفاصيل انظروا نصّ صقر المري في هذا المؤلَّف حول هذا المصطلح ودلالاته.

Mara
مَرا

(LB) (SY)

'Woman' in colloquial pronounciation: used to refer to trans women or effiminate men as per prevailing social norms.

*

امرأة باللفظ العامي؛ تُطلق على العابرات أو الرجال المثليين ذوي طابع أنثوي بحسب الأنماط الاجتماعية السائدة.

Mara Khālṣa
مرا خالصة

(LB)

'Pure woman', i.e. totally effeminate. Mostly used among gay men.

*

لديه سلوكيات أنثوية طاغية ا لا تشوبها الرجولة بتاتًا. تستخدم غالبًا بين الرجال المثليين.

Mzanibra
مزنبرة

(PS)

From the colloquial word for clitoris, zanbūr, and refers to a 'strong' girl, who is so sexually active that her clitoris has morphed into a penis, i.e. is now manly.

*

من كلمة زنبور، أي البظر بالعامية. تقال للصبية 'القوية' النشطة جنسيًا لدرجة أن بظرها قد تحوّل إلى قضيب، أي أصبحت كالرجال.

Mzanṭar
مزنطر

(LB)

Someone (usually a man) who cares for their appearance and clothes, wears revealing or attention-grabbing outfits. Can be used to refer to an effeminate or gay man.

*

شخص (عادة رجل) يهتم بهندامه بإفراط، يرتدي ملابس كاشفة أو ملفتة للانتباه. قد تستخدم للإشارة إلى الرجال والفتيان ذوي طابع أو سلوكيات أنثوية تدلّ على مثليتهم.

Mistarjila/Mrajjila
مسترجلة/مرجلة

(JO) (LB) (SY)

'Mannish'/'manlike' or 'manned-up': from *rajul* (man). A tomboy who has masculine appearance or mannerisms.

*

فتاة ذات طابع أو سلوكيات رجولية.

Mistazilmé
مستَزلِمة

(JO)

'She who emulates men': has masculine mannerisms; tomboy.

*

التي تتشبه 'بالزلام' أي الرجال؛ فتاة ذات طابع ذكوري.

Mṭaqṭaq
مطقطق

(SY)

If said by a straight person, a derogatory term meaning 'faggot' or 'sissy'. If said by a queer person, it is to refer to someone who is camp or has effeminate mannerisms.

*

إذا قالها شخص مغاير الجنس ، فيكون مصطلح إزدرائي يماثل 'شاذ/ مخنث'. إذا قالها شخص كويري ، فيكون مصطلح تحبب يشير إلى شخص 'مفقوع' في أدائه الجندري أو يبالغ عمدًا في السلوكيات الأنثوية.

Maftūḥ
مفتوح

(PS)

'Opened', i.e. has been penetrated; a bottom in gay sex.

*

تدلّ على الرجل الذي فُتح أي اولج به في وضعية 'السالب' أثناء الجنس.

Mfaḥḥlé
مفحلة

(PS)

Feminisation of the Arabic word for stallion, which refers to a virile man. Refers to a woman with 'manly' mannerisms.

*

من كلمة فحل، أي الذكر القوي من كل حيوان. تشير إلى امرأة قوية أو ذات سلوكيات 'رجولية'.

Muqaṣwa'
مُقَصْوَع

(SY)

'Sways while he walks'; effeminate; gay.

*

يمشي ويتقصوع أي يتمايل ؛ ذو سلوكيات أنثوية.

Malūsh Bil Banat
مَلوش بالبنات

(PS)

'Has no business with women:' a man who is not sexually attracted to women, insinuating that he is gay.

*

رجل لا علاقة له بالبنات بالمحكية، أي أنه لا ينجذب إلى النساء جنسيا تلميحًا إلى أنه مثلي.

Min 'Enna
مِن عِنّا

(LB)

'One of us': used by members of the queer community to identify each other, so as to avoid using recognisable words.

*

أي 'من عندنا.' تُستخدم بين أعضاء مجتمع الميم لتجنب استخدام كلمات صريحة تكشف مثليتهم.

Manyūk/Manyak
منيوك/مَنيَك

(LB) (SY)

'Gets fucked': passive participle of *nīk*, colloquial word for fucking (originally in classical Arabic), used in French as the verb *niker*: refers to the man who takes on the bottom role in gay sex; gay.

*

مشتقّة من كلمة نيك (انظروا مادة ينتاك)، الرجل الذي يتخذ الدور السالب في الجنس المثلي ؛ مثلي.

Mūjab
موجَب

(SY)

'Positive', the top/active partner in gay sex.

*

الرجل الذي يولج بشريكه في الجنس المثلي.

Nā'im
ناعم

(JO) (SY)

'Soft' or 'smooth': a gay man with 'soft' features and feminine mannerisms.

*

مثلي الجنس له ملامح وسلوكيات 'ناعمة' أي أنثوية.

Nabulsī
نابلسي

(PS)

'From Nablus', a city in Palestine that has a reputation of being full of gay men. Synonymous with 'gay'.

*

نسبة لمدينة نابلس في فلسطين، والاعتقاد السائد بوفرة الرجال المثليين فيها، فأصبحت مرادفة لشخص مثلي الجنس.

Nāyiṭ
نايط

(PS)

Someone who is lazy, can't be bothered, or moves around slowly; can refer to a man trying to act coy, i.e. effeminately. Among the terms to mock any man who does not act the way men are 'supposed to'.

*

متراخي، كسول، بطيء الحركة، كأنه لا يبالي بشيء. تدلّ على رجل يتحرك بدلال وغنج أي أنّ سلوكياته انثوية. من المصطلحات التي تستهزئ بالرجل الذي لا يتصرف 'كما يجب' على الذكور.

Naẓīf/Ndīf
نظيف

(JO)

An attractive twink who is deemed fuckable because of how 'proper' and 'clean' he looks.

*

شاب مثلي صغير السن، ناعم، والذي يُعتبر قابلا للنيك لأناقة هندامه و/أو منظره 'المرتّب'.

Na'nū'/Na'na'/Mna'na'
نعنوع/نعنع/متعنع

(LB) (SY)

'Loose', 'swaying': refers to effeminate men and boys. Might have originated from the name of the protagonist of *Na'nū' al-Dallū'* ('Na'nou' the spoiled'), the Arabic version of the American animated series *My Pet Monster*.

*

رخو، متمايل، تدلّ على الرجال والفتيان ذوي طابع أو سلوكيات أنثوية. قد يعود أصلها إلى اسم نعنوع الدلوع بطل المسلسل الذي حمل اسمه، وهو النسخة العربية لمسلسل الرسوم المتحركة *My Pet Monster*.

Homo
هومو

(PS)

Arabisation of the Hebrew term for gay (taken itself from the English): common among Palestinians in the 1948-occupied territories (Palestinian citizens of Israel) due to the spread of Hebrew words among them. Does not carry negative connotation in Hebrew and Palestinian Arabic that 'homo' does to English speakers.

*

تعريب لكلمة شائعة لرجل مثلي بالعبرية (المأخوذة بدورها من الإنكليزية)؛ شائعة بين فلسطينيي الداخل (الذين يسكنون المناطق المحتلّة عام ١٩٤٨، أي داخل دولة إسرائيل) بسبب انتشار الكلمات العبرية بينهم.

Wallādiyya/Wallūda
ولادية/ولّودة

(PS)

From *walad* ('boy'); has masculine mannerisms; tomboy.

*

فتاة ذات طابع أو سلوكيات تتشبه بالفتيان الذكور.

Iraqi Dialects

*

لهجات العراق

Bājī
باجي

Turkish for 'big sister', used as a term of respect for any older woman, equivalent to 'auntie' but also used among lesbians, where the younger woman addresses her older partner with this. Sometimes used among gay men to tease those older among them, the way ukhtī (sis) is used in other dialects.

*

الأخت الكبيرة بالتركية وكانت كلمة احترام للمرأة الأكبر سنًا مثل 'خالة' أو 'طانط' إنما أطلقت كذلك أيضًا على المثليات حيث تخاطب الصغرى شريكتها الأكبر بهذه اللفظة. يستعملها الرجال المثليون أحيانًا لمداعبة الأكبر سنًا بينهم على غرار 'أختي' في لهجات أخرى.

Ballāʿ ʿĪr
بلّاع عير

'Cock swallower': a man who enjoys frequently performing fellatio.

*

العير هو الأير أو القضيب باللهجة العراقية؛ تدلّ على رجل يستلذّ ممارسة الجنس الفموي مع رجال آخرين بكثرة.

Bīh Dūda/Dūdakī
بيه دودة/دودكي

'Has worms, wormy': has worms in his anus that make him itch for sex, usually suggesting that he is a bottom; also in reference to the fallacy that gay men are riddled with disease.

*

مدوّد أو مصاب بالديدان في مؤخرته التي 'ترعاه' لا تدعه يصبر على النيك، ما يوحي عادة بأنه يتخذ الدور السالب في الجنس المثلي (الشريك المفعول أي المولج به الذي يسمّى *bottom* في الاصطلاح الشعبي). وكذلك إشارة إلى المغالطة الازدرائية القائلة بإن الرجال المثليين مصابين بشتى الأمراض.

Pusht/Busht
پُشت/بُشت

'Back'/'behind' in Persian; a derogatory term for an immoral young man whose family has disowned him for scandalous behaviour, part of which may be his homosexuality, as he has offered his 'behind' to others. It is notable that Iraqi dialect is replete with Turkish and Persian loan words.

*

الظَهر أو الخلف بالفارسية؛ كلمة تحقيرية تدلّ على النغل أو السيء الأخلاق الذي تبرأ منه أهله بسبب ما اركتبه من أفعال مشينة، قد تكون ميوله المثلية بينها إذ أباح ظهره أي مؤخّرته للآخرين. اللافت أن اللهجة العراقية حافلة بالكلمات والمصطلحات الفارسية والتركية الدخيلة.

Jarū, pl. Jrāwa
جرو، ج. جراوة

'Puppy', offensive allusion to a younger 'faggot' or twink, based on the perception that he is weak and helpless like a puppy and therefore can be dominated or abused without consequence.

*

كناية تحقيرية عن شابّ ناعم أو مثلي، بناء على التصور أنه أعزل مستضعف لا يستطيع الدفاع عن نفسه، لذا يسهل السيطرة عليه والتحرش به بدون عاقبة.

Jawdaliyya
جودَليّة

A small rug or mat for sitting on the ground; refers to a person who can take a pounding during sex, and it is therefore preferable to fuck them on a mattress on the floor and not on the bed.

*

بساط أو فرشة صغيرة للجلوس على الأرض باللهجة العراقية؛ كناية عن شخص يستلذّ بالرهز العنيف أثناء الجنس فتحبّذ مضاجعته على الأرض بدل السرير.

Ḥīz
حيز

Effeminate, gay in Turkmen or Kurdish, may come from Persian; an effeminate young man or with a bad reputation due to his homosexual activity; was mostly heard in northern Iraq but is now outdated.

*

مأبون أو مخنث بالتركمانية أو الكردية وقد يعود أصلها إلى الفارسية. تُطلق على شاب يُعتبر ذو طابع أنثوي أو سيء السمعة من جراء علاقاته الجنسية المثلية. كانت تُتداول غالبًا في شمال العراق واندثر استعمالها اليوم.

Khuncha
خُنچة

An emasculating term of Persian or Turkish origin used to denigrate a young man who is considered easy to insult and who cannot stand up for himself, which implicitly casts suspicion on his sexuality.

*

كلمة تحقيرية فارسية أو تركية الأصل، تُطلق على شاب يُعتبر ضعيفًا لا يستطيع التصدي للإذلال والاستقواء أو لتلقي الإهانات، للانتقاص من رجولته والتشكيك ضمنيًا في ميوله الجنسية على هذا الأساس.

Khanīth/Mukhannath
خنيث/مخنّث

Effeminate, sissy, androgynous, intersex, transgender; in pre-modern writings on sexuality in Arabic, the term refers to those exhibiting behaviour that would today lead them to be called transvestites, and who made a living off music. For further details, refer to Saqer Almarri's text.

*

ذو سلوكيات أنثوية، ناعم و/أو دلوع، يمتلك صفات أنثوية وذكورية في الوقت ذاته ، بينجنسي.ة، عابر.ة الجنس. ترد العبارة في الأدبيات العربية حول الجنسانية لتدلّ على فتيان يتشبهون بالنساء في مظهرهم وسلوكهم ويعتاشون من الغناء والرقص. للمزيد من التفاصيل انظروا نصّ صقر المري في هذا المؤلَّف.

Dunbug Al-ʿīr
دُنبگ العير

'Cock drum': the *dunbug* is the goblet drum or *darbuka* in Iraqi dialect; refers to someone who craves cock and can keep taking cocks one after another, just like a drum receiving beats from the drummer.

*

الدنبگ اسم آلة الدربكّة بالمحكية؛ تُطلق على رجل يتخذ الدور السالب في الجنس المثلي متلهف دومًا للقضبان لدرجة أنه يستطيع أن يظلّ يتلقاها الواحد تلو الآخر، كما تتلقى الطبلة نقرات طبالها المتتالية.

Zubuqchiyya
زُبُقْچِيَة

'Lesbian': of Turkish origin and is no longer widely used, replaced by *bājī*.

*

اصلها تركي وتدلّ على امرأة مثلية؛ اندثر استعمالها لدى الأجيال المعاصرة وشاعت بدالها كلمة باجي.

Ziballaʿī
زِبلَعي

Possibly of Aramaic origin; pejorative term for someone who lives a life of luxury and ease without toil, or is materially well-off; also used in southern Iraq to indicate the passive partner in gay sex or bottom, perhaps because of its phonetic closeness to *bāli* *zibb* (cock swallower).

*

قد يكون أصلها آرامي، مصطلح ازدرائي للمتراخي المتهنئ أو المتمكن ماديًا الذي يعيش بلا كدّ وعمل؛ تُطلق كذلك في جنوب العراق على المفعول به في الجنس المثلي، ربما لقربها اللفظي من عبارة بالع الزبّ.

دودكي

Dūdakī

Zanāna
زنانة

Effeminate; derived from the Persian word *zan*, meaning female / woman]. Its opposite is *mardāna*, from the Persian *mard* (masculine / man) for anything that can be described as manly or macho. Considered a highly offensive insult.

*

مشتقّة من الكلمة الفارسية زَن التي تعني أنثى. رجل ذو سلوكيات أنثوية؛ نقيضها مَرْدانة من كلمة 'مَرْد' الفارسية التي تعني ذكر، للدلالة على كل شي يتصف بالفحولة المفرطة. تُعتبر شتيمة في غاية التحقير والإساءة.

Shādh.a, pl. Shawādh
شاذّ.ة، ج. شواذّ

'Deviant', i.e. deviant from the (sexual) norm; now considered offensive by many. Formerly the 'neutral' medical / scientific term in official discourse for gay before the spread of mithlī (same-orientated).

*

مصطلح تحقيري لشخص مثلي الجنس 'يشذّ' أي ينحرف عن القاعدة، كونه لا ينجذب إلى الجنس الآخر. كان هذا هو المصطلح العلمي / الطبي 'المحايد' المعتمد في الأدبيات الرسمية قبل شيوع 'مثلي'.

Ṭanṭa
طنطة

French for 'aunt', or elderly and well-respected woman. Can also mean queen, effeminate, pansy or queen, or just an elderly gay man.

*

كلمة فرنسية تعني عمّة، تُستخدم لمخاطبة امرأة مسنة باحترام. تدلّ على شاب ذو طابع أو سلوكيات أنثوية. قد تدلّ أيضًا على رجل مثلي متقدم بالعمر.

'Arīḍ.a
عريض.ة

'Wide', i.e. used to disparage someone who is sexually active through implying that their orifice – either vagina or anus – has widened owing to frequent penetration.

*

صفة ازدرائية تطلق على شخص نشيط جنسيًا على اعتبار أنّ فتحة شرجه أو فرجها قد اتسعت جراء الإيلاج المتكرر؛ الشريك السالب في الجنس المثلي.

Farcha
فرچة

'Brush' in colloquial speech: refers to a young person who is considered too tender to be penetrated vigourously, therefore you have to rub against them gently like a brush.

*

فرشاة بالمحكية؛ تُطلق على مثلي صغير السن مائع لا تسمح نعومته بممارسة الجنس الخشن معه أو الولوج به بشدة، فعلى شريكه أن يحتكّ به وبجسده رويدًا وبلطف كما الفرشاة لكي يتمكن من الولوج به.

Farkh, pl. Frūkh
فرخ، ج. فروخ

'Baby Chick': derogatory term referring to a younger 'faggot' or twink, based on the perception that he is helpless like a chick and therefore can be dominated; usually refers to the bottom in gay sex.

*

صغير الدجاجة الذي أفرخت بيضته للتو، كناية تحقيرية عن شاب ناعم أو مثلي ذو سلوكيات أنثوية وملامح ناعمة فيُشبّه بفرخ الطائر، الأعزل الذي لا يستطيع الدفاع عن نفسه، لذا يسهل السيطرة عليه؛ عادة يتخذ الدور السالب في الجنس المثلي.

Farakhchī/Mfarrakhchī
فرخچي / مفرّخچي

Someone who is into *frūkh*. Man who has sex with other men with soft features; the top in gay sex. The attached suffix *-ci* is from Turkish, and denotes a person associated with a particular thing (see *ṭubjī* in the Levant section); may carry connotations of paedophilia

*

رجل يحبذ ممارسة الجنس مع 'الفروخ' ويتخذ دور الموجب في الجنس المثلي (الفاعل المولج بشريكه الذي يُسمى *top* في الاصطلاح الشعبي)؛ لاحقة -چي تدلّ بالتركية على صاحب الأمر أو المهنة (انظروا مادة طُبجي في باب بلاد الشام)؛ قد تحمل العبارة على أنه متحرش بالقاصرين.

Qurm Pāreh/Qarrām/Tqambar 'Alayh
قُرم پاره / قَرّام / تقَمْبَر عليه

'He who craves young men', derived from Persian; *qarm* also denotes a strong craving for meat in classical Arabic; a qarrām is a gay man perceived as a 'top'; used in verb form *tqambar*, 'to cruise / try to pick up': often contrasted with *ṣurm pāreh* or *zan pāreh* for men who try to chase after or cruise women (*ṣurm* is a narrow hole in Baghdadi dialect and *zan* is woman in Persian); considered outdated andd no longer in use.

*

عبارة مندثرة، فارسية الأصل وتعني مشتهي الغلمان؛ القَرَم شدّة اشتهاء اللحم بالفصحى القديمة؛ والقرّام رجل مثلي يحبّ إغراء الشباب وملاحقتهم، عادة يُعتبر الطرف الموجب في الجنس. ويقال تقَمْبَر عليه بمعنى حاول 'اصطياده' ليراوده عن نفسه. تقابلها عبارة صُرم پاره أو زن پاره لتدلّ على الرجل الذي يعشق النساء ويبذل جهدًا في اصطيادهن عبر نيل إعجابهن وإغرائهن بالتأنق والتظرف (الصُرم هي الفتحة الضيقة بالعامية البغدادية وزَن امرأة أو أنثى بالفارسية).

Laḥḥāsa
لحّاسة

'Licker', i.e. a woman who likes to pleasure other women; lesbian.

*

امرأة تلعق أي تستلذّ بإمتاع نساء أخريات؛ مثلية.

Ma'būn
مأبون

From classical Arabic; someone with an ailment or defect because he desires men; refers to the bottom in gay sex, used in some dialects as an all-purpose insult to challenge a man's masculinity.

*

من به أُبنة أي عيب أو داء لأنه يشتهي أن يضاجعه الرجال؛ كلمة فصيحة قديمة تُستعمل كمسبّة ببعض اللهجات لوصم رجل لأي سبب عن طريق الطعن في رجوليته؛ الرجل الذي يولج به شريكه أي السالب في الجنس المثلي.

Mistarjila
مسترجلة

'Mannish'; tomboy; suggesting she may be lesbian; in the past the term *zanmardeh* was also used ('woman-man' in Persian).

*

فتاة ذات طابع أو سلوكيات رجولية ما يوحي بأنها مثلية؛ سابقًا كان يقال لها زَن مردة (امرأة رجل بالفارسية).

Manyūch, pl. Manāwīch
منيوچ، ج. مناويچ

Same as miniāk in Iraqi pronunciation (see the Levant section); the passive partner in gay male sex, or assumed to be from his appearance and mannerisms.

*

مماثلة لمنتاك باللفظ العراقي (انظروا باب بلاد الشام)؛ الشاب السالب أو المفعول به في الجنس المثلي، أو يبدو كذلك من مظهره وسلوكياته.

لحاسة

Laḥḥāsa

Moṭa/Ymawwiṭ
موطة/يموّط

Originally an Italian brand of soft-serve ice cream, now a generic term for ice cream in Iraq. Used as a euphemism or coded pickup for a blow job: also used an insult against a gay male who loves giving blow jobs to straight men.

*

مشتقّة من اسم شركة موتا الإيطالية للمثلّجات التي كانت منتوجاتها رائجة في العراق في الماضي إنما تدلّ اليوم على البوظة والمثلجات عامةً؛ كناية عن مصّ القضيب أو لدعوة أحدهم إلى ذلك بشكل مشفّر؛ مسبّة تُطلق كذلك على رجل مثلي يستلذّ بمصّ قضبان الرجال الغيريين.

Hawwar/Muhawwir/Īhawwir
هوّرْ/مْهَوّر/إيْهوّرْ (يهوّر)

'His hole has enlarged': originally used for widened screw or bolt holes; a homophobic slur to describe a man with an enlarged anus due to high sexual activity.

*

كبرت أو اتسعت ثقبته حتى صارت كالهور تقال لثقب البرغي أساسا؛ مصطلح تحقيري للدلالة على شاب مثلي، على افتراض أنّ فتحة شرجه اخذت تتسع جراء النشاط الجنسي المكثف.

Yshīloh
يشيلْه

'Takes or holds it': a man who can be penetrated by or suck cock of any size, i.e. gay.

*

يشيل القضيب أي يستطيع ان يحمله؛ تدلّ على رجل القادر على تحمل ولوج القضيب في مؤخّرته أو مصّه مهما كبر حجمه.

Gulf Dialects

*

لهجات بلاد الخليج

Bahrain البحرين BH	Kuwait الكويت KW	Oman عُمان OM	Qatar قطر QA
Saudi Arabia السعودية SA	United Arab Emirates الإمارات العربية المتحدة AE	Yemen اليمن YE	

Abū Ṣibyān/Awlad
أبو صبيان/أولاد

OM

'The boys-guy'. Refers to men who pursue sexual relationships with younger men. *Abū* is used to refer to whatever a person is 'into' or associated with. The term can often be used also to refer to paedophiles.

*

كُهل مثلي يحبذ ممارسة الجنس مع الفتيان. تُستخدم كذلك للإشارة إلى الرجال المتحرشين جنسيًا بالقاصرين.

Abū Frūkh
أبو فروخ

AE BH

Semi-interchangeable with *Abū ṣibyān*. An older gay man who is attracted to twinks.

*

شبه مترادفة لأبو صبيان. كُهل مثلي ينجذب إلى الفروخ أي الفتيان الناعمين.

Alwān
ألوان

SA

'Colours': used among younger queer people to refer to each other.

*

تُستخدم بين الأشخاص الكويريين الشباب للإشارة إلى بعضهم البعض.

Amlas/Amlaṭ
أملَس/أملَط

BH

Arabic for 'soft'/'smooth'/'hairless'; effeminate; gay.

*

خالٍ من الشعر، لديه ملامح ناعمة و/أو أنثوية، أي يوحي بأنه مثلي الجنس.

Ikhwānī/Khwānī
إخواني/خواني

QA

'Brotherly': refers to a man who has intimate relationships with other men. Originates from the expression 'like my brother'. The term has no connection to the Muslim Brotherhood.

*

مصطلح مشتق من عبارة 'مثل أخي'؛ يدلّ على رجل يقيم علاقات حميمية مع رجال آخرين وله تصرفات أنثوية. لا علاقة للمصطلح بجماعة الإخوان المسلمين.

Allāhumma Iḥfaẓnā
اللهمّ احفظنا

SA

'God help us': used derogatively to refer to queer people as if they were a scourge.

*

عبارة ازدرائية لِ الأشخاص الكويريين وكأنهم آفة يجب التعوذ منها.

Bāṣ Madrasa
باص مدرسة

OM

'School bus': pejorative term used to refer to a promiscuous bottom in gay sex.

*

الشخص الذي يتخذ دور السالب في الجنس المثلي (الشريك المفعول أي المولَج به الذي يسمّى *bottom* في الاصطلاح الشعبي)، بقصد تعبير من يقيم عدة علاقات جنسية عابرة إذ 'يركبه' كثيرون في آن واحد.

Barantha
بَرَنثة

KW OM

Effeminate; soft; gay.

*

ذو طابع أنثوي، ناعم، مثلي.

Bazaranjī

بَزَرَنجي

SA

'Someone who is interested in seeds', referring to young men in the Hijazi dialect. The term refers either to gay men who have sex with younger men or to paedophiles.

*

'شخص مهتم بالبذور'، البذور هنا كناية عن الشباب الصغار السنّ في منطقة الحجاز. مصطلح تحقيري يدلّ إمّا على الرجال المثليين الذين يمارسون الجنس مع رجال أصغر سنًا و/أو الذين يتحرشون بالقاصرين.

Ba'sūsa

بعسوسه

YE

Derogatory term for someone effeminate, i.e. gay.

*

عبارة تحقيرية لرجل ذو طابع أنثوي، أي مثلي الجنس.

Bannūt/Bannūtī/Bannatī

بنّوت/بنوتي/بنّاتي

BH QA OM

'Girly', i.e. effeminate; soft; gay.

*

ذو طابع أنثوي، ناعم؛ مثلي.

Both

بوث

KW

Arabisation of 'both'; refers to gay men considered 'versatile' with their sexual partners.

*

تعريب كلمة *both* الانكليزية التي تعني 'كلاهما' أو 'كلا الأمرين'؛ تدلّ على الرجل المثلي الي يحبّذ تبادل الأدوار مع شركاؤه أثناء ممارسة الجنس.

Both Rujūlī

بوث رجولي

KW

See 'both' previous: a gay man who is both versatile and masculine / macho-looking.

*

انظروا مادة بوث أعلاه؛ رجل مثلي يتسم بسمات مفرطة الذكورية وكذلك يتبادل الأدوار مع شركاوه الجنسيين.

Boya, pl. Boyāt

بوية، ج. بويات

BH KW QA OM SA

Arabisation and feminisation of the word 'boy', refers to a masculine-presenting woman (queer or not), on the presumption that all queer woman are masculine. Most commonly used in the Gulf region.

*

تعريب كلمة *boy* أي صبي بالإنكليزية مع زيادة تاء التأنيث؛ تدلّ على امرأة مثلية أو أي امرأة ذات مظهر أو سلوكيات رجولية (على افتراض أن كل المثليات يتشبهن بالذكور). شائعة غالبًا في منطقة الخليج.

Tarf

تَرْف

KW

Derogatory term for a soft or effeminate man, i.e. gay.

*

تستخدم لتحقير رجل ذو طابع أنثوي، ناعم؛ مثلي.

Taksī

تكسي

OM

Arabisation of 'taxi'; pejorative term used to refer to a promiscuous bottom in gay sex.

*

الرجل الذي يتخذ دور السالب في الجنس المثلي، لتعبير من يقيم العديد من العلاقات الجنسية العابرة.

بوية

Boya

Jins Thālith

جنس ثالث

(QA) (SA)

Arabic for 'third gender': derogatory term used to refer to queer, androgynous, and trans people or anyone who shows non-normative sexual or gender expression.

*

مصطلح لتحقير الأشخاص الكويريين أو الذين يمتلكون صفات أنثوية ورجولية في الوقت ذاته أو العابرين.ات؛ كل من يظهر عليهم أداء جندري غير معياري.

Jins/Jannūs/Jnīsah

جنس/جَنّوس/جْنيسة

(KW) (QA)

Shortening/abbreviation of *jins thālith* (see above): derogatory term commonly used to refer to queer people; androgynous; trans; or anyone who shows ambiguous or non-normative sexual or gender expression.

*

اختصار أو تصغير 'جنس ثالث' (انظروا المادة أعلاه).

Ḥāmed Walad

حامد ولد

(SA)

'Boy Hamed': tomboy, girl with masculine mannerisms as per prevailing social norms, indicating that she may be a lesbian.

*

فتاة تتسم بسلوكيات ذكورية بحسب الأنماط الاجتماعية السائدة، قد توحي بأنها مثلية.

Ḥabaqbaq

حَبَقبَق

(SA)

Lesbian; of unclear etymology.

*

امرأة مثلية؛ اشتقاقها مبهم.

Khibba

خِبّة

(OM)

'Hole' or 'opening': most likely refers to the anus, i.e. someone who is penetrated in gay sex; a bottom in gay sex.

*

ثغرة أو حفرة؛ يُرجّح أنها تدلّ على فتحة الشرج؛ كناية عن الرجل الذي يُولج به أي يتخذ دور السالب في الجنس المثلي.

Kharbān

خربان

(QA)

'Broken'/'spoiled'/'out of order': a bottom in gay male sex.

*

الرجل الذي 'لا يعمل كما يجب،' تحديدًا من يتخذ الدور السالب في الجنس المثلي.

Khikrī/Khikāriyya

خِكري/خِكرية

(SA)

Colloquial word to refer to effeminate men. Can also mean spoiled, sissy, androgenous, intersex, transgender. Also used in Kuwait as a synonym to daft.

*

كلمة عامية تدلّ على الرجال ذوي السلوكيات الأنثوية. يمكن ان تعني أيضًا دلوع أو ناعم، أو تدلّ على امتلاك صفات أنثوية ورجولية في الوقت ذاته، بينجنسي.ة، عابر جنسيًا. كما تستخدم في الكويت كمرادف لأهبل.

Khanytwah

خنيتوة

(BH)

Same as *khanīth* in Bahraini dialect.

*

خنيث/مخنّث بالمحكية البحرينية.

Khanīth/Mukhannath (also pronounced Khanīf/Mukhannaf)/Makhnūth/Makhānīth/Mikhnātha

خنيث/مخنّث (أيضًا تُنطق خنيف/مخنف)/مخنوث/مخانيث/مِخناثة

(AE) (BH) (KW) (QA) (OM) (SA) (YE)

Widespread across the Arab world; used today for someone transgender, or considered effeminate, sissy, androgynous; in pre-modern writings on sexuality in Arabic, the term refers to those exhibiting behaviour that would today lead them to be called transvestites, and who made a living off music; or those who would have physical sex characteristics that we would today call intersex. For further details, refer to Saqer Almarri's text.

*

مشتقّة من الخنوثة؛ مصطلح واسع الانتشار في المنطقة العربية يدلّ على شاب ذو طابع أو سلوكيات أنثوية، ناعم و/أو دلوع؛ من ي.تمتلك صفات أنثوية وذكورية في الوقت ذاته، بينجنسي.ة، عابر.ة الجنس. ترد العبارة في الأدبيات العربية القديمة حول الجنسانية لتدلّ على فتيان يتشبهون بالنساء في مظهرهم وسلوكهم ويعتاشون من الغناء والرقص. للمزيد من التفاصيل انظروا نص صقر المري في هذا المؤلّف حول هذا المصطلح ودلالته.

Khor

خور

(KW) (OM)

'Creek' in reference to the anus; used among gay men to refer to a bottom, and particularly a promiscuous one who is assumed to be constantly wet with fluids.

*

الخور جدول أو مجرى الماء الصغير بالعامية وهنا كناية فتحة الشرج، تستخدم بين الرجال المثليين ليدلّوا على الرجل الذي يتخذ دور السالب في الجنس المثلي، وخاصة الذي يقيم العديد من العلاقات الجنسية العابرة، على افتراض أن شرجه تجري به السوائل باستمرار.

Khawal

خَوَل

(SA)

The *khawal* was a traditional native male dancer in Egypt who cross-dressed in feminine attire and was of a type popular up until the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. The word is now used like 'faggot' to refer offensively to anyone suspected of being effeminate as per prevailing social norms, and/or gay. Mostly used in Egypt but also in other Arabic-speaking countries.

*

كان الخول راقصًا شعبيًا في مصر يرتدي ملابس نسائية، وحظي بشعبية كبيرة حتى أواخر القرن الثامن عشر وبداية القرن التاسع عشر. تستخدم الكلمة غالبا في مصر وأيضًا في بلدان عربية أخرى الآن لتحقير كل من يُشتبه بأنه مثلي أو له طابع وسلوكيات أنثوية بحسب الأنماط الاجتماعية السائدة.

Khwayy Li-bnayyāt

خويّ لبنيّات

(OM)

'Brother of girls': effeminate, likened to girls, hinting that he must be gay.

*

'أخو البنات'؛ ذو طابع أنثوي يُشبّه بالبنات، مما يوحي بأنه مثلي لا محالة.

Khayl

خيل

(OM)

'Female horse': used to denigrate a man who exhibits effeminate behaviour.

*

أنثى الحصان؛ تستخدم للانتقاص من ذكورية الرجل الذي يظهر سلوكيات أنثوية.

خُور

Khor

Dagg
دگ

(KW)

'To pound / hammer something', in Gulf / Iraqi pronunciation. Indicates a very attractive man; also heard in Morocco.

*

فعل الدقّ باللفظ المحكي؛ تدلّ على رجل جذاب للغاية؛ متداولة أيضًا في المغرب.

Dūdakī
دودكي

(BH)

'Wormy': has worms in his anus that make him itch for sex; in reference to the fallacy that gay men are riddled with disease.

*

مدوّد أو مصاب بالديدان في مؤخرته التي لا تدعه يصبر على النيك. وكذلك إشارة ازدرائية إلى المغالطة القائلة بأنّ الرجال المثليين مصابين بشتى الأمراض.

Rā'ī Ṣibyān
راعي صبيان

(BH)

'The shepherd of boys'. The term refers either to gay men who have sex with younger men or to paedophiles.

*

مصطلح تحقيري يدلّ إمّا على الرجال المثليين الذين يمارسون الجنس مع رجال أصغر سنًا وأو الذين يتحرشون جنسيًا بالقاصرين.

Rujūlī
رجولي

(BH) (KW)

'Manly': a masculine-looking or acting gay man.

*

رجل مثلي ذو مظهر و/أو سلوكيات ذكورية.

Rakhwah
رخوة

(YE)

'Loose' or 'flaccid'; effeminate. In the north of Yemen, the term is derogatory, while in the south it is not stigmatising and merely describes a masculine person with feminine mannerisms.

*

من له سلوكيات أنثوية. في شمال اليمن، يُقصد به الازدراء، بينما في الجنوب ، فهو ليس للوصم بل مجرد نعت لذكر له سلوكيات أنثوية.

Rayyūs / Rawwās
رَيّوس / رَوّاس

(AE)

Colloquial term for 'reverse'; versatile; a gay man who takes on both top and bottom positions in gay sex.

*

مصطلح عامّي بمعنى 'معاكس'؛ يُطلق على الرجل المثلي الذي يحبّذ تبادل الأدوار مع شركاؤه أثناء ممارسة الجنس.

Sandūla
سَندولة

(SA)

Colloquial *Hijazi* term; effeminate in looks and behaviour; wears tight clothes and makeup; sissy, coy, i.e. gay; of unclear etymology.

*

مصطلح حجازي عامي؛ ذو طابع أنثوي؛ يتشبه بالنساء في منظره وسلوكه فيلبس ملابس ضيقة ويضع مستحضرات التجميل؛ ناعم، مائع، دلّوع أي مثلي؛ اشتقاقها مبهم.

Saykal
سيكل

(OM)

Arabised slang for 'bicycle': gets 'ridden' a lot: used for shaming someone promiscuous; has a lot of casual sex: usually a bottom.

*

تعريب *bicycle* دراجة بالإنكليزية؛ تُقال لتعيير شخص يقيم العديد من العلاقات الجنسية العابرة لأنه 'يُركب عليه' مرارًا؛ عادة يتخذ دور السالب في الجنس (انظروا أيضًا مادة بسكلتة في باب مصر).

Shādhdh.a pl. Shawādh
شاذ.ة، ج. شواذّ

(BH) (KW) (QA) (OM) (SA)

'Deviant', i.e. deviant from the (sexual) norm. Now considered offensive by many. Formerly the 'neutral' medical / scientific term in official Anglo-American discourse for gay, from where it spread to the Arab world before the spread of *mithlī* (same-orientated); but also widespread in Egyptian dialect.

*

مصطلح ازدرائي لشخص مثلي الجنس 'يشذّ' اي ينحرف عن القاعدة، كونه.ا لا ينجذب إلى الجنس الآخر. كان هذا هو المصطلح العلمي / الطبي 'المحايد' المعتمد في الأدبيات الرسمية الأنكلو-أميركية، ومنها انتقلت إلى العالم العربي، قبل شيوع 'مثلي'؛ كذلك شائع بالعامية المصرية.

Shīmayl/Shīmayla
شيميل/شيميلة

(BH) (KW)

Arabisation of 'shemale': derogatory term referring to trans women.

*

تعريب كلمة *shemale* وهي مصطلح تحقيري للنساء العابرات بوصفهن ذكورًا ممسوخين نساءً.

Ṣbayy
صبَي

(OM)

Diminutive of *ṣabī* (boy): light-skinned young man: a young gay man: twink: a bottom in gay sex

*

شاب ذو بشرة فاتحة؛ شاب مثلي صغير السن وناعم عادة يتخذ دور السالب في الجنس المثلي.

Ṣabyak
صبَيك

(KW)

Diminutive of *ṣabī* (boy): A young girl with masculine mannersisms as per prevailing social norms; butch lesbian.

*

مشتقة من صبي، فتاة ذات سمات رجولية؛ مثلية 'مسترجلة' المظهر تتشبه بالذكور بحسب الأنماط الاجتماعية السائدة.

Ṣaf'ūn
صَفعون

(AE) (KW) (OM)

Colloquial term used by gay men to refer to someone who is hot or attractive in 'the market'. May originate in the phenomenon of the *ṣafā'ina* (literally means 'slapped around') in the Abbasid era, who were young men at the court of the caliph al-Muqtadir who were paid by those present to get slapped on their behinds as a form of entertainment.

*

مصطلح عامي يتداوله الرجال المثليون للإشارة إلى شخص مثير أو جذاب في 'سوق الشباب'. قد يعود أصله إلى ظاهرة الصفاعنة في عهد الخليفة العباسي المقتدر بالله وهم فئة في البلاط كانت تجلس بجوار الخليفة أو الأمراء وظيفتهم أن يُصفعوا على أقفيتهم للتسلية مقابل أجر من يصفعهم.

Ṭayzaliyya/Ṭazla/Ṭuzūl
طيزلية/طزلة/طزول

(KW)

Derived from the colloquial word '*ṭīz*', meaning the buttocks. The term is used by gay men to refer to each other; in particular to refer to a bottom.

*

مشتقة من كلمة 'طيز' أي المؤخرة بعدّة لهجات. يستخدمها الرجال المثليون للإشارة إلى بعضهم البعض ليدلّوا على من يتخذ دور السالب في الجنس المثلي.

'Arūsa
عروسة

(SA)

Bride or doll; effeminate, sissy; twink.

*

ذو طابع أو سلوكيات أنثوية ، ناعم ، مثلي صغير السن.

'Amm
عَم

(BH)

Uncle; refers to an older gay man; sugar daddy.

*

رجل مثلي كَهل؛ يصرف على شركاءه الجنسيين الذين بالعادة يصغرونه سنًا.

'Amma
عمّة

(SA)

Auntie; dominant sexual partner and / or the dom in lesbian kink / BDSM contexts; sometimes used among queer men.

*

الامرأة المثلية التي تسيطر على شريكتها إثناء ممارسة الجنس و/أو قد تستلذ إذلالها في ألعاب التسلط ضمن سياق جنسي (رضائي)؛ تُستخدم في الغالب بين النساء ولكنها قد تدلّ على أحيانًا على رجلٌ كويري.

'Ora
عورا

(OM)

'One-eyed' in the feminine form in reference to the anus; gay.

*

لفظ عامي لعوراء، تأنيث أعور أي الشخص ذو العين الباصرة الواحدة؛ كناية عن فتحة الشرج؛ رجل مثلي.

Farkh
فرخ

(AE) (BH) (KW) (SA)

'Baby chick': derogatory term similar to 'faggot' for (relatively younger) effeminate gay men with soft features; usually a bottom.

*

كناية تحقيرية عن فتى مثلي صغير السن (نسبيًا) ذو سلوكيات أنثوية وملامح ناعمة فيُشبّه بفرخ الطائر؛ عادة يتخذ الدور السالب في الجنس.

Faṭfūṭ
فَطفوط

(KW)

A term of endearment to refer playfully to a young or soft gay man or twink.

*

صفة تحبب تُطلق على رجل مثلي صغير السن و/أو ناعم من باب المداعبة أو التغنيج.

Fagga
فَقّة

(QA)

Arabisation of 'faggot'; a derogatory term used to describe gay or effeminate men.

*

تعريب *faggot* الكلمة الإنكليزية التحقيرية للرجال المثليين أو ذوي طابع وسلوكيات أنثوية.

Fannāna
فنّانة

(KW)

'Female artist': Arabic term used often for female pop singer; used by gay men to refer to each other.

*

تُستخدم بين الرجال المثليين للإشارة إلى بعضهم البعض بشكل عامّ.

Fī-l-mandūs
في المندوس

(OM)

Inside the *mandūs*, a traditional chest used to hold a bride's trousseau or dowry; closeted.

*

المندوس صندوق خشبي يُستعمل لحفظ جهاز العروس أو مهرها. يدلّ المصطلح على شخص يتحفظ على المجاهرة بميوله.ا الجنسية، المثلية على الأرجح.

Fīhā Hawā
فيها هوى

(KW)

'Inclined to'; used among gay men to refer to someone reluctant to openly express his sexuality but whom they perceive as 'sus' (suspicious), or gay.

*

تستخدم بين الرجال المثليين ليدلّوا على من يتحفظ على المجاهرة بميوله الجنسية، إلا أنهم يشتبهون بأنه مثلي.

Qammāṭ
قمّاط

(YE)

'Swaddle or tie up something / someone with a rope or cloth' in classical Arabic: a man attracted to younger twinks or effeminate men; the opposite of *wara'* (see below) in popular culture.

*

القمط بالفصحى شدّ شيء أو إنسان بحبل أو لفه قماش؛ الرجل الذي يميل إلى فتيان ناعمي الصفات وذوي طابع أنثوي؛ نقيضه الورع (انظروا أدناه) في الثقافة الشعبية.

Kāsir al-Milla
كاسر الملّة

(AE)

'He who has broken away from their faith / denomination': someone who has strayed away from the path: gay.

*

شخص انشقّ عن الملّة أو الجماعة، أي ضلّ الطريق؛ مثلي في هذا السياق.

Kāhina
كاهنة

(OM)

'High priestess'; an established, older gay 'mother' who enjoys respect and stature in the community. Mostly used among lesbians but also sometimes by gay men.

*

شخص مثليّ بالغ في السن يحظي باحترام ويُنظر له بمقام 'الأم المراعية' في مجتمع الميم المحلي. يغلب تداولها بين النساء المثليات ولكن أحيانًا عند الرجال المثليين كذلك.

Katkūt
كتكوت

(KW)

'Chick': used as a term of endearment for a young or soft gay man: twink.

*

صغير الدجاجة؛ تُطلق تحببا على شاب مثلي الجنس صغير السن ؛ ناعم.

Kūnī
كُوني

(SA)

Derogatory term in Farsi for gay men: *kūn* means ass, and *kūnī* is someone who is 'ass-orientated', i.e. gay.

*

كلمة فارسية لتحقير رجل مثلي. 'كون' تعني طيز (مؤخرة) بالفارسية وكوني هو الشخص 'الميّال للطياز'.

Kayka
كيكة

(KW) (YE)

Arabisation of 'cake': attractive; pretty; gorgeous.

*

تعريب كلمة *cake* الإنكليزية أي قالب الحلوى؛ جذاب؛ جميل؛ فاتن.

Lāḥsitnuh al-Bagara
لاحستنه البقرة

(AE)

'Has been licked by a cow': derogatory term to refer to gay men.

*

لعقته البقرة، مصطلح تحقيري يدل على الرجال المثليين.

Lazzāba / Lazaz
لزّابة / لَزلَز

(KW) (SA)

Colloquial Arabisation of 'lesbian'.

*

تعريب كلمة *lesbian* أي مثلية بالمحكية.

Lūṭī
لوطي

(BH) (QA) (OM) (SA)

A descendant of the biblical character Lot, or the prophet Lot in Islam. Refers to a 'faggot' or a gay man; and *liwāṭ* is the (demeaning) religious term for sodomy.

*

سليل شخصية لوط التوراتية، أو النبي لوط في الإسلام، تدلّ على رجل مثلي الجنس واللواط المصطلح الديني (التحقيري) للجنس الإيلاجي بين الرجال.

Laydiyya
ليديه

(KW)

Arabisation of 'lady'; a femme lesbian: someone with deliberately exaggerated feminine (as per prevailing social norms) appearance and gender performance.

*

تعريب كلمة *lady* الإنكليزية أي سيدة؛ مثلية تتعمد الأنوثة المفرطة (بحسب الأنماط الاجتماعية السائدة) في أدائها الجندري ومظهرها.

Līga
ليقه

(AE)

A colloquial term that refers to malleable material such as dough or mud; effeminate; 'faggot'. Within local queer subcultures, it refers to a particular way of dressing and styling that is flamboyant and aims to be shocking and confrontational. The term can be derogatory if used by other queers to dismiss those who ascribe to this subculture.

*

مصطلح عامي لمادّة مطواعة كالعجين أو الطين. يدلّ على نمط معين في اللبس والسلوكيات، يتصف صاحبه بالتباهي والصدامية في الوقت ذاته. قد يُعتبر مسيئًا إذا استخدمه أشخاص كويريون للانتقاص من أولئك الذين ينتمون إلى هذه الثقافة الفرعية.

Māl al-Ḥūṭa
مال الحوطة

(BH)

The *ḥūṭa* (pl. *ḥuwaṭ*) is a barn where horses and other animals are kept in the villages. It is assumed that youth and men who hang around those areas engage in same-sex practices. In Bahraini dialect (and other Gulf and Iraqi dialects), *māl* is added before a word as a possessive article or to indicate association, so the term means 'someone who hangs around the barn'.

*

الحوطة (ج. حُوَط) هي حظيرة تتم فيها تربية الخيول والحيوانات الأليفة الأخرى في القرى. يقال إنّ الشباب والرجال الذين يترددون إلى أنحاء الحوطة منخرطون في ممارسات جنسية مثلية. وتدلّ كلمة 'مال' في اللهجة البحرينية (وعدة لهجات خليجية وعراقية أخرى) على الملكية أو العلاقة بالشيء الذي يليها (مثل 'تبع' أو 'بتاع' في اللهجات الشامية والمصرية). مال حوط تعني 'الذي يُعرف بأنه يتردد إلى الحظائر'.

Māmā
ماما

(OM)

An older and effeminate queer man who has a maternal relationship with other queers around him.

*

رجل كويري كُهل أنثوي الطبع يتعامل مع الكويريين الآخرين حوله بغريزة الأمومة.

Māyi'
مايع

(KW)

'Liquid' or 'non-solid'; denotes a person who is weak or spoiled, and/or effeminate.

*

مائع بالفصحى؛ سائل، ذائب، عكس الجامد؛ تدلّ على رجل ضعيف أو مدلّع، و/أو ذو طابع أنثوي.

Mbasbis
مبَسبِس

(SA)

Pampered, coy, soft; a derogatory way to call someone gay and/or a bottom.

*

مدلّع، مغنّج، ناعم؛ كلمة تحقيرية لرجل مثلي و/أو يتخذ الدور السالب في الجنس.

Mutaḥawwil
متحوّل.ة

(QA)

'Changeable, variable'; trans; some today consider it offensive and not accurately reflecting their experience, choosing instead the *'ābir.a* (one who crosses over).

*

شخص عابر.ة لأنها تحوّلت من حال إلى حال؛ يستاء منها بعض العابرين و/أو يعتبرونها مصطلحًا بائدًا وغير دقيق لا يعكس تجربتهم.

مال الحوطة

Māl al-Ḥūṭa

مخوفي.ة

Mkhawfī.ya

Mutashabbih.a

مُتَشَبِّه.ة

KW SA

'To imitate or mimic': mostly used in the media or by politicians to denigrate gender-ambiguous or trans people. In a hadith attributed to the Prophet Muhammad, he says, 'May God curse women who imitate men and men who imitate women.'

*

شخص ي.تتشبه بالجنس المغاير؛ مصطلح يستخدم في الغالب في وسائل الإعلام أو من قبل السياسيين لازدراء العابرين.ات أو الأشخاص الذين يتسم أداؤهم الجندري بالإيهام؛ هناك حديث يُنسب للنبي محمد يقول فيه 'لعن الله المتشبهات من النساء بالرجال والمتشبهين من الرجال بالنساء'.

Mitkassir

متكسّر

OM

'Broken': effeminate; gay; bottom.

*

ذو طابع أنثوي، مثلي، من يتخذ دور السالب في الجنس المثلي.

Mukhanṭa'

مُخنطع

YE

Effeminate; gay.

*

ذو طابع أنثوي، مثلي.

Mkhawfī.ya

مخوّفي.ة

AE KW

'Freaked out': closeted; down-low; discreet.

*

شخص متحفظ.ة على التعبير عن ميولها الجنسية علنًا.

Mrabrab

مرَبرَب

BH KW

Voluptuous, full-figured / curvy in a way reminiscent of the female body. Can be used to refer to a gay man, but not exclusively.

*

ممتلئ الجسم، مكتنز بشكل قد يذكّر بالجسم الأنثوي. قد تدلّ على رجل مثلي، ولكن ليس حصريًا.

Markaba

مركبة

YE

'Vehicle', or colloquially means 'can be mounted'; refers to a gay man, particularly a bottom.

*

متاح 'ركوبه' لأي كان؛ تدلّ على رجل مثلي، تحديدًا من يتخذ الدور السالب في الجنس المثلي.

Markūb

مركوب

BH

'Ridden' / 'is mounted': derogatory term for a gay man; bottom.

*

عبارة تحقيرية لمن 'يُركب عليه' أي الرجل الذي يتخذ الدور السالب في الجنس المثلي.

Marin

مَرِن

OM

Effeminate; a man who is 'flexible' in his gender performance; soft.

*

رجل ذو طابع أنثوي لكونه مرنًا، يتراوح في أدائه الجندري، ناعم.

Mazghūb
مزغوب

(SA)

From *zughb*, 'peach fuzz' – light hair on pre-pubescents, or down feathers on young birds; a hairless twink, usually a bottom in gay sex.

*

من الزغب، أي الشعيرات الخفيفة التي تنبت على أجسام اليافعين عند أول بلوغهم أو الريش النامي على الطائر الصغير؛ تدلّ على شاب مثلي ناعم خفيف الشعر وصغير السن، الذي عادةً يتخذ الدور السالب في الجنس المثلي.

Mistarjila
مسترجلة

(BH) (KW)

'Mannish': a tomboy; has masculine mannerisms and conduct as per prevailing social norms, that may hint at her being gay or simply indicate a more masculine gender presentation.

*

فتاة ذات طابع أو سلوكيات تتشبه بالذكور بحسب الأنماط الاجتماعية السائدة، قد توحي بأنها مثلية أو لها أداء جندري أكثر رجولية من غيرها (نسبيًا).

Maṣbanjī
مَصبَنجي

(BH) (KW)

Derived from *ṣubyān* (boys); a man who spends his time seeking younger men and boys for sex; gay; used predominantly by older generations; may carry pedophilic connotations.

*

مشتقّة من صبيان؛ رجل يقضي جلّ وقته في البحث عن شباب وفتيان آخرين يمارس الجنس معهم؛ مثلي؛ وقد تحمل على أنه يتحرش بالقاصرين؛ اندثر استعمالها بين الأجيال الفتية اليوم.

Ma'raba
مَعْرَبة

(YE)

From the colloquial term *'arb* meaning to fuck; a derogatory term to refer to a bottom in gay male sex.

*

من المصطلح العامي 'العرب' الذي يعني ممارسة الجنس؛ مصطلح تحقيري للرجل الذي يأخذ الدور السالب في الجنس المثلي.

Mulāḥaẓ
مُلاحَظ

(OM)

Members of Omani Sultan Qaboos's entourage were referred to as *mulāḥaẓīn* ('marked out'). It's popular belief that the sultan was sexually active with them; the term is used as an implicit way to refer to a man who has sex with other men.

*

كانت تسمية الملاحَظين تُطلق على مرافقي السلطان العماني قابوس إذ كان يُعتقد أنّ السلطان يقيم علاقات جنسية معهم؛ تُستخدم أحيانًا للتلميح إلى رجل يمارس الجنس مع رجال آخرين.

Mindaqq.a
مِندَقّ.ة

(OM)

'Gets pounded': bottom in gay sex; gay.

*

مثلي، الرجل الذي يتخذ دور السالب في الجنس المثلي.

Muntaḥin
منطحن

(OM)

'Ground/'pounded': bottom in gay sex; gay.

*

مثلي، الرجل الذي يتخذ دور السالب في الجنس المثلي.

Muntaḥin

يربي حمام

Yrabbī Ḥamām

Manyak/Manyaka/ Manyūch
منيك/منيكة/منيوج

(KW) (OM) (SA) (YE)

From *nik*, classical Arabic for penetrative sex, also used in Levantine and Iraqi dialects for fucking; the bottom in gay sex; gay. (N.b. the final 'k' is pronounced 'ch' in several Gulf and Iraqi dialects.)

*

انظروا مادة منيوك/منيك في باب بلاد الشام؛ المثلي السالب؛ تُلفظ الكاف ج *ch* في عدة لهجات خليجية وعراقية.

Mwalliʿ
مولّع

(SA)

'On fire': effeminate; very elegantly dressed and well-groomed.

*

رجل ذو سلوكيات أنثوية؛ أنيق جدًا وشديد العناية بلبسه وهندامه.

Nāriyya
ناريّه

(OM)

'Fiery': very hot, attractive guy.

*

رجل جذاب جدا، مثير جنسيًا.

Nāʿim
ناعم

(BH) (KW)

'Soft': effeminate-acting or looking man; gay.

*

رجل له ملامح ناعمة وسلوكيات أنثوية توحي بأنه مثلي.

Nathya
نَثْيَة

(KW)

'Feminine nature'. Term indicates a female animal; a derogatory term for a gay man.

*

من 'أنثى'، تدلّ عادة على الأنثى من جنس أي حيوان ما لكن أيضا لتحقير رجل مثلي.

Nafaq
نفق

(OM)

'Tunnel', in reference to a guy's anus being enlarged due to frequent sexual activity.

*

كناية عن رجل اتسعت فتحة الشرج لديه بسبب كثرة النشاط الجنسي.

Waraʿ, pl. Warʿān
وَرَع، ج. ورعان

(QA) (SA) (YE)

In classical Arabic, a weak, cowardly, man; a young, soft gay man; twink; the opposite of *qammāṭ* (above) in popular culture.

*

بالفصحى القديمة الوَرَع هو الرجل الضعيف أو الذليل؛ تدلّ على شاب مثلي صغير السن وناعم الصفات؛ نقيضها أعلاه بالثقافة الشعبية (انظروا أعلاه).

Yrabbī Ḥamām
يربَي حَمام

(BH)

'Pigeon keeper': *ḥamām* (pigeon) is a common euphemism for penis; the term refers to someone who engages in gay sex.

*

تشيع كلمة حمامة في العديد من البلدان الناطقة بالعربية للكناية عن القضيب. يدلّ المصطلح على رجل يمارس الجنس المثلي.

Egyptian Dialects

*

لهجات مصر

Name of a girl + al-Dakar
اسم فلانة + الدَكَر

The word *al-dakar* ('male' with a macho connotation) is added after the name of a girl who is masculine-presenting, as a hint that she is lesbian, e.g. Sara al-dakar.

*

تُضاف كلمة 'الدكر' (ذكر) إلى اسم أي فتاة تبدي سلوكيات أو أداءً جندريًا رجوليًا، مثلا عزة الدكر، سارة الدكر إلخ للتلميح بأنها مثلية.

Okhtī/Okhtshī
أختي/أختشي

'Sister': endearing term used by queer men to refer to their queer 'sisters': sometimes the t is added in the middle of the word for verbal emphasis.

*

مصطلح تحبّب يخاطب به الرجال الكويريون بعضهم البعض بصفتهم أخوات؛ أحيانًا تُضاف التاء في وسط الكلمة للمبالغة اللفظية.

'X' + (ya'nī) Lā Mu'ākhaza
إسم فلان.ة + (يعني) لا مؤاخذة

'Name of person + (I mean,) no offence': When 'no offence' is used in conjunction with a name, it can be to insinuate that they're queer. For example: 'Ahmad is, no offence': or 'Ahmed is, I mean, no offence'.

*

تُضاف عبارة لا مواخذة إلى أي اسم علم شخصي (أحيانًا مع 'يعني') مثلا أحمد يعني لا مؤاخذة، كتمليح بأنّ هذا الشخص مثلي.ة.

Barghal
برغل

'Man' in *sīm al-fannānīn*, or the coded slang of street entertainers in Cairo; used to indicate a top in the sīm of homosexual men, in contrast to *kūdyāna* (see below).

*

تعني رجل في سيم الفنانين، أي اللغة السرية الخاصة بفناني الشوارع في القاهرة؛ في سيم المثليين تدلّ على الرجل الذي يتخذ الدور الموجب أثناء ممارسة الجنس (الفاعل المولج بشريكه والذي يُسمى *top* في الاصطلاح الشعبي)؛ نقيضها الكوديانة أدناه.

Biskilitta
بسكِلِتّة

Arabisation of *bicyclette* (bicycle) in French; gets 'ridden' a lot; normally a 'bottom'; used for shaming someone promiscuous; has a lot of casual sex (see also saykal in the Gulf section).

*

تعريب *bicyclette*، أي دراجة بالفرنسية؛ تُقال لتعيير شخص يقيم العديد من العلاقات الجنسية العابرة لأنه 'يُركب عليه' مرارًا فاعتاد اتخاذ دور السالب في الجنس (الشريك المفعول أي المولَج به الذي يسمّى *bottom* في الاصطلاح الشعبي)؛ انظروا أيضًا مادة سيكل في باب الخليج.

Byākhud Fīhā
بياخُد فيها

'He takes it there': i.e. he takes the dick into his ass; derogatory term to refer to a gay man.

*

ياخذ أي يسمح بولوج القضيب في مؤخرته، مصطلح إزدرائي يدلّ على رجل مثلي إذ يسمح بأن يولَج به.

Byittākhid
بيتّاخِد

'He gets taken'; refers to the receptive partner or bottom in gay male sex because he is penetrated, thus seen as weak.

*

يسهل التغلب عليه؛ تدلّ على الرجل المثلي الذي 'يؤخذ' أي الذي يولج به شريكه الجنسي (من يسمّى السالب أو *bottom* في الاصطلاح الشعبي) فيُعدّ مستضعفًا.

Byitrikib
بيترِكِب

'Can be ridden/mounted'; derogatory term to refer to someone who is gay; bottom.

*

عبارة تحقيرية لوصم من 'يُركب عليه' أي الرجل الذي يتخذ الدور السالب في الجنس المثلي.

Birūḥ
بيروح

'He goes'; someone who can easily be 'led astray' and seduced by gay men; a pejorative term for a gay man.

*

يذهب، بمعنى يسهل للرجال المثليين إغواؤه ومراودته عن نفسه، مصطلح إزدرائي يدلّ على شابّ مثلي.

Khintā
خِنْته/خنتى

Derived from the same etymology as *mukhannath* (see the Gulf section): widespread across the Arab world; in pre-modern writings on sexuality in Arabic, the term refers to those exhibiting behaviour that would today lead them to be called transvestites, and who made a living off music, or those who would have physical sex characteristics that we would today call intersex; used today for someone transgender, or considered effeminate, sissy, androgynous. For further details, refer to Saqer Almarri's text in this volume on this term.

*

مشتقّة من الخنوثة، مرادفة لمخنّث وخنيث (انظروا باب الخليج)؛ واسعة الانتشار في المنطقة العربية؛ تدلّ على من يمتلك صفات أنثوية وذكورية في الوقت ذاته، بينجنسي.ة، عابر.ة الجنس. ترد العبارة في الأدبيات العربية القديمة حول الجنسانية لتدلّ على فتيان يتشبهون بالنساء في مظهرهم وسلوكهم ويعتاشون من الغناء والرقص. للمزيد من التفاصيل انظروا نصّ صقر المري في هذا المؤلّف حول هذا المصطلح ودلالته.

Khawāja
خَواجة

Of Persian origin, used as an honorific title for elite men; usually refers in slang to a (usually) Western foreigner; used in polite society as an alternative for *khawal* 'faggot', mostly by members of the upper socio-economic classes.

*

كلمة من أصل فارسي كانت تُستخدم كلقب للرجال الأشراف. بالعامية المصرية تدلّ على شخص أجنبي، تحديدًا غربي؛ تستخدم كعبارة بديلة عن 'خول'، يتداولها أفراد الفئات الاجتماعية والاقتصادية العليا.

Khawal
خَوَل

The khawal was a traditional native male dancer in Egypt who cross-dressed in feminine attire, and was popular up until the late 18th and early 19th centuries. The word is now used as a slur like 'faggot', to refer offensively to any man suspected of being effeminate and / or gay, presuming he is a bottom. Mostly used in Egypt but also in other Arabic-speaking countries.

*

كان الخول راقصًا شعبيًا في مصر يرتدي ملابس نسائية، وحظي بشعبية كبيرة حتى أواخر القرن الثامن عشر وبداية القرن التاسع عشر. تستخدم الكلمة الآن غالبًا في مصر ولكن كذلك في بلدان أخرى ناطقة بالعربية كشتيمة لتحقير كل شاب يُشتبه بأنه مثلي أو له طابع أنثوي، وعلى افتراض أنه يتخذ الدور السالب في الجنس.

Dibla
دِبلة

Wedding or engagement ring; used for alluding to the anus as something round and narrow; a gay man; a bottom.

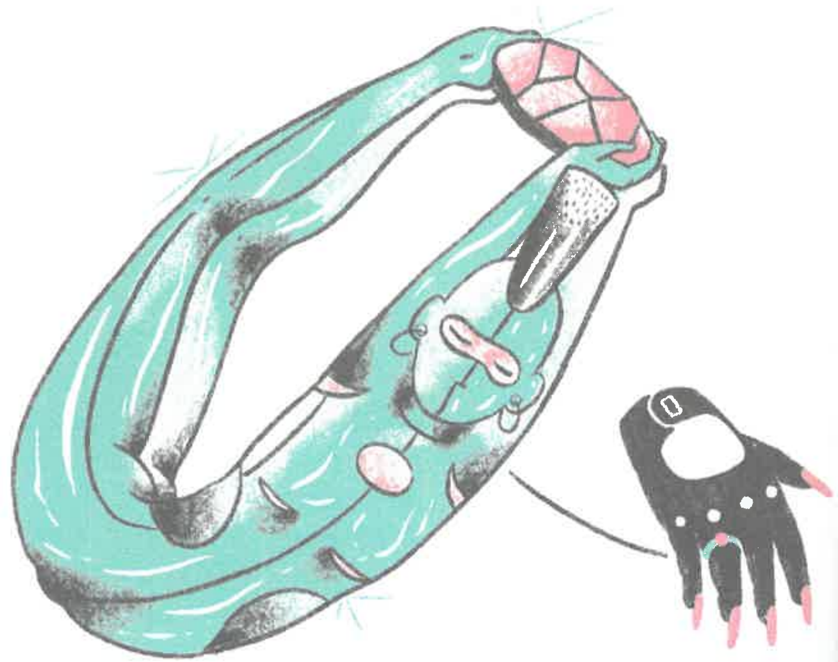
*

خاتم الزواج أو الخطوبة؛ كناية عن فتحة الشرج كونها ضيقة ومدوّرة؛ رجل مثلي؛ الشخص الذي يتخذ الدور السالب في الجنس المثلي.

خَوَل

Khawal

دبلة



Dibla

Dah/Dī Minhom
دَه. منهم/دي منهم

'This one is one of them': derogatory term to hint that the said person is gay / queer. Similar to the term *wāḥida min iyyāhum* (one of them) used for sex workers.

*

عبارة تلميح بأنّ الشخص المعني ي.تنتمي إلى مجتمع الميم؛ تُعتبر ازدرائية؛ تشبه عبارة 'واحدة من إياهم' التي تُطلق على عاملات الجنس.

Dūbl Fās/Dabal Fīs
دوبل فاس/دَبل فيس

Arabisation of the French / English *double-face*: a versatile or switch in the coded slang of Cairo homosexuals.

*

تعريب عبارة *double-face* التي تعني ذو وجهين بالإنكليزية والفرنسية؛ رجل مثلي يحبذ تبادل الأدوار مع شركائه الجنسيين؛ تُحسب ضمن مفردات لغة السيم الخاصة بالرجال المثليين في القاهرة.

Rinbū
رِنبو

Arabisation of 'rainbow', in reference to the rainbow flag that symbolises the LGBTQ+ community; used to indicate someone believed to belong to it; gay / queer.

*

تعريب كلمة *rainbow* أي قوس القزح إشارةً إلى ألوان علم قوس القزح الذي يرمز لمجتمع الميم وتقال للدلالة على شخص يُحسب أنه ينتمي إليه؛ مثلي، كويري.

Sīs
سيس

Term of unclear origin, denotes an effeminate young man: gay.

*

مصطلح مجهول الأصل، يدلّ على شاب ذو سمات أنثوية، ما يوحي بأنه مثلي.

Shāzz.a, pl. Shawāzz
شاذَ.ة، ج. شَواذ

'Deviant', i.e. deviant from the (sexual) norm. Now considered offensive by many: formerly the 'neutral' medical / scientific term in official Anglo-American discourse for gay, from where it spread to the Arab world before the spread of mithlī (same-orientated); but also widespread in Egyptian dialect.

*

مصطلح ازدرائي لشخص مثلي الجنس 'يشذّ' أي ينحرف عن القاعدة، كونه.ا لا ينجذب إلى الجنس الآخر. كان هذا هو المصطلح العلمي / الطبي 'المحايد' المعتمد في الأدبيات الرسمية الأنكلو-أميركية، ومنها انتقلت إلى العالم العربي، قبل شيوع 'مثلي'؛ كذلك شائع بلهجات عربية عدة.

Shimāl
شِمال

'North', but also means the left side in Egyptian dialect; refers to anyone who operates outside of social norms and 'decency' (e.g. whore, thief, etc), including those who are gay.

*

علاوة عن الجهة، تعني جانب اليسار باللهجة المصرية؛ يُطلق المصطلح على أي شخص ي.تنشط في مجال يُعدَ خارجًا على الأعراف الاجتماعية والأخلاق الحميدة (مثل المومس، اللص إلخ)، بما في ذلك المثلي.ة.

Ṭarī
طَري

Soft, tender (not rough or coarse) man perceived as too effeminate, not tough enough to fulfill normative masculine gender roles, thus suspected to be gay.

*

ناعم، غير خشن؛ رجل يتسم بسمات أنثوية في مظهره أو سلوكه مما يجعله ناقص القسوة المطلوبة في الأداء الجندري المعياري للرجال وبالتالي محطّ ارتياب بأنه مثلي.

ʿAgala
عَجَلة

'Bicycle' in Egyptian dialect; synonymous to *Biskilitta*.

*

دراجة هوائية بالعامية المصرية؛ مرادفة لمادة بِسكِلِتة.

ʿAyyil Minaswin
عَيِّل مِنَسوِن

'Woman-like': effeminate youth, perceived to be gay.

*

'فتى أصبح كالنساء'، أي ذو طابع و/أو مظهر أنثوي، ما يوحي بانه مثلي.

Fāfī
فافي

Effeminate, coy, sissy, gay; derogatory; used in the Levant as well.

*

مرادفة لمخنّث؛ رجل ذو طابع أنثوي، ناعم أو دلّوع، أي مثلي؛ ازدرائية؛ شائعة في بلاد الشام أيضًا.

Farfūr
فَرفور

Derived from the Italian word *farfalla* (butterfly): a guy considered coy or spoilt and incapable of 'acting like a man', which includes effeminate mannerisms, and thus perceived to be gay. Egyptian dialect is replete with and Italian loan words.

*

مشتقة من كلمة *farfalla* الإيطالية التي تعني فراشة؛ تُطلق على شاب يُعتبر دلوعًا أو غنوجًا وذو سلوكيات انثوية اي أنهغير قادر على تمثل الأداء الجندري الذكوري بحسب الأنماط الاجتماعية السائدة، ما يوحي بانه مثلي.

Kawānīn/Ykawnin/ Kawnana/ Byiʿmil Kawānīn
كوانين/يكَونِن/كوننة/بيعمل كَوانين

Term of unclear origin, used by gay men in Cairo to refer to each other in their coded slang which was called *lughat al-sīm*; can be used as a singular noun, verb or in the infinitive form.

*

مصطلح مجهول الأصل، يتداوله مثليو القاهرة في لغة السيم وهي اللغة السرّية الخاصة بهم ليشيروا إلى بعض؛ يُستعمل كاسم مفرد او فعل أو مصدر.

Kudyāna
كوديانة

'Whore' or 'bellydancer' in popular slang, effeminate man or trans woman known for doing sex work in addition to dance; also used within the queer community to refer to a gay or effeminate man; anyone who is known to be promiscuous; its opposite is barghal (see above) in the sīm slang; commonly used in Sudan also.

*

مومس أو راقصة باللغة الشعبية، رجل مثلي 'مخنث' أو امرأة عابرة تمتهن العمل الجنسي بالإضافة إلى الرقص الشعبي؛ إنما تُستخدم أيضًا داخل مجتمع الميم للدلالة على رجل مثلي أو يتسم بسمات أنثوية؛ أي شخص معروف.ة بإقامة العديد من العلاقات الجنسية العابرة؛ نقيضها البرغل في لغة السيم القاهرية (انظروا أعلاه)؛ شائعة في السودان أيضًا.

Komsiyya, pl. Komsāyāt
كُومسيّة، ج. كومسايات

Arabisation of the French term '*il / elle est / ils sont comme ça*' (s / he is / they are like that). Commonly used among the Francophone bourgeoisie, and in broader 'polite society' or contexts where explicit or coarse words are to be avoided. The term became more widespread following the incident of the Queen Boat raid of 2001, a landmark incident in the debate around sexuality in Egypt in which 52 gay men at a party on a houseboat were arrested, after which members of the LGBTQ+ community began to say 'he is a *komsiyya*' / 'they are *komsāyāt*'.

*

تعريب المصطلح الفرنسي *il/elle est/ils sont comme ca* ، أي هو.ي.م هكذا؛ متداولة بين أفراد البرجوازية الناطقة بالفرنسية في مصر؛ وتستخدم بشكل عام في الأوساط والسياقات التي تستدعي ألفاظًا 'مؤدّبة' غير ويجب فيها تجنب الألفاظ الخشنة أو الصريحة (مثلا مثلي، شاذ، خول إلخ) للإشارة إلى شخص مثلي. اتسع انتشار هذا المصطلح بعد واقعة الكوين بوت في القاهرة عام ٢٠٠١ والتي كانت مفصلية في إثارة النقاش حول الجنسانية في مصر، حيث داهمت الشرطة حفلة على أحد العوامات وألقت القبض على ٥٢ رجلا مثليا، إذ بات يقال في الأوساط المثلية بعدئذ 'هو كومسيّة' أو 'هم كومسايات'.

Matnī
مَتني

'Bent / folded over': depicting the physical positioning of a bottom in gay sex; used metaphorically to refer to a gay or effeminate man.

*

مثنيّ أو منحنٍ، تصويرًا للوضعية الجسدية للرجل الذي يتخذ الدور السالب في الجنس المثلي؛ تُطلق مجازًا على رجل مثلي أو ذو سمات أنثوية.

Madām
مَدام

Arabisation of the French word madame used in most parts of the Arab world for an older and/or 'respectable' lady; used for men with effeminate characteristics which suggest they are gay; sometimes used playfully between gay men themselves.

*

تعريب كلمة *madame* الفرنسية وشائعة في معظم أرجاء العالم العربي للدلالة على سيدة بالغة في العمر و/أو مرموقة. تُطلق على رجل ذو سمات أنثوية، ما يوحي بأنه مثلي، وأحيانًا تُتداول بين الرجال المثليين أنفسهم من باب الدعابة.

Maftūḥ
مفتوح

'Opened up', i.e. a man who has been penetrated; a derogatory term for a bottom; gay man.

*

تشير إلى الرجل الذي يتخذ دور السالب في الجنس المثلي إذ 'ينفتح' شرجيًا جراء الولوج به. كلمة تحقيرية للدلالة على رجل مثلي.

Mqaṣṣ
مقَص

'Scissors'; derogatory term to refer to queer women and lesbians, in reference to how they are imagined to have sex.

*

مصطلح ازدرائي للدلالة على النساء الكويريات والمثليات، تصوزًا لكيفية ممارستهن الجنس مع بعض.

Min dol
مِن دول

'One of those'; refers to gay people without saying it explicitly.

*

أنه.ا 'من أولئك'؛ تدلّ على المثليين.ات ضمنيا.

Nagafa
نجفة

'Chandelier' in Egyptian dialect: flamboyant and effeminate; gay.

*

ثريا الأضواء باللهجة المصرية؛ رجل ناعم يتباهى بسلوكياته الأنثوية؛ مثلي.

Wāḥid Mitnāk
واحد متناك

'Someone who gets fucked'; a man penetrated by other men. Derogatory term for a gay man; often used merely to denigrate or weaken the intended person by emasculating him.

*

مصطلح تحقيري يخصّ الرجل الذي يُناك أي يولَج به من قبل رجال أثناء ممارسة الجنس معهم؛ تدلّ على رجل مثلي وكثيرًا ما تُقال لمجرد الاستضعاف أو الحط من شأن الشخص المعني عن طريق الانتقاص من رجولته.

Yā wād yā Bit/Wād Bit
يا واد يا بِت/واد بِت (بنت)

'You boy, you girl'; used to sarcastically refer to a boy or girl with ambiguous gender expression, or androgynous qualities; androgynous; employed to let out the anxiety this ambiguity stirs up in members of society.

*

تُطلق استهزاءً على شاب أو فتاة ذات أداء جندري مبهم أو يمتلك صفات أنثوية وذكورية آن واحد، تنفيسًا عن الريبة التي يثيرها هذا الغموض لدى أفراد المجتمع.

نَجَفَة

Nagafa

Sudanese Dialects

*

لهجات السودان

Awlād Mīkī
أولاد ميكي

'Mickey-Mouse kids'; used to refer to men who do not conform to traditional masculine norms of gender presentation or behaviour, including effeminate or gay men, on the presumption this is out of a desire to emulate Western culture.

*

إحالة إلى الشخصية الكاريكاتورية الشهيرة؛ تُطلق على الرجال المثليين عمومًا، الرجال الذين لهم طابع أنثوي أو الذين لهم أداء جندري أو سلوكيات لا يتوافق مع نمط الذكورة التقليدية على افتراض أن هذا يعود إلى رغبتهم في التمثل بالثقافة الغربية.

Ḥilwa, pl. Ḥilwāt
حِلوة، ج. حِلوات

'Sweet-' or 'candy-like'; derogatory term for gay men and trans women.

*

مصطلح ازدرائي يدلّ على الرجال المثليين والنساء العابرات.

Khanith/Mukhannath
خَنيث/مخنّث

Effeminate, sissy, androgynous, intersex, transgender; in pre-modern writings on sexuality in Arabic, the term refers to those exhibiting behaviour that would today lead them to be called transvestites, and who made a living off music. For further details, refer to Saqer Almarri's text in this volume on this term.

*

ذو طابع أو سلوكيات أنثوية، ناعم و/أو دلوع، يمتلك صفات أنثوية وذكورية في الوقت ذاته، بينجنسي.ة، عابر/ة الجنس. ترد العبارة في الأدبيات العربية القديمة حول الجنسانية لتدل على فتيان يتشبهون بالنساء في مظهرهم وسلوكهم ويعتاشون من الغناء والرقص. للمزيد من التفاصيل انظروا نصّ صقر المري في هذا المؤلّف حول هذا المصطلح ودلالته.

Khawal
خَوَل

The khawal was a traditional native male dancer in Egypt who cross-dressed in feminine attire and was of a type popular up until the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. The word is now used as a slur like 'faggot', to refer offensively to anyone suspected of being effeminate and/or gay, presuming he is a bottom. Mostly used in Egypt but also in other Arabic-speaking countries.

*

كان الخول راقصًا شعبيًا في مصر يرتدي ملابس نسائية، وحظي بشعبية كبيرة حتى أواخر القرن الثامن عشر وبداية القرن التاسع عشر. تستخدم الكلمة الآن غالبا في مصر ولكن كذلك في بلدان اخرى ناطقة بالعربية كشتيمة لتحقير كل شاب يُشتبه بأنه مثلي أو له طابع أنثوي، وعلى افتراض أنه يتخذ الدور السالب في الجنس (الشريك المفعول أي المولج به الذي يسمّى *bottom* في الاصطلاح الشعبي).

Dakariyya
دَكَرِيّة

Attributive form of *dhakar* (male) with feminine suffix added; a girl with masculine qualities or mannerisms, thus perceived to be gay as per social norms.

*

نسبة إلى 'ذكر' بإضافة تاء التأنيث، فتاة ذات طابع أو سلوكيات ذكورية بحسب الأنماط الاجتماعية السائدة، ما يوحي بأنها مثلية.

Ṣaqr
صقر

Arabic for hawk; colloquial term commonly used to refer to lesbians.

*

كلمة عامية تستخدم عادة للإشارة إلى النساء مثليات.

أولاد ميكي

Awlād Mīkī

Kalaga
كَلَجة

An effeminate-looking / acting man or a masculine-looking / acting woman, which suggests that s / he is gay.

*

رجل ذو طابع أو سلوكيات أنثوية، أو فتاة ذات طابع أو سلوكيات رجولية بحسب الأنماط الاجتماعية السائدة، ما يوحي بأنه.ا مثلي.ة.

Kudyāna
كوديانة

'Whore' or 'bellydancer' in popular slang, effeminate man or trans woman known for doing sex work in addition to dance; also used within the queer community to refer to a gay or effeminate man; anyone who is known to be promiscuous. Commonly used in Egypt also.

*

مومس أو راقصة باللغة الشعبية، رجل مثلي 'مخنث' أو امرأة عابرة تمتهن العمل الجنسي بالإضافة إلى الرقص الشعبي؛ إنما تُستخدم أيضًا داخل مجتمع الميم للدلالة على رجل مثلي أو يتسم بسمات أنثوية؛ أي شخص معروف.ة بإقامة العديد من العلاقات الجنسية العابرة. شائعة في مصر أيضًا.

Lūṭī
لوطي

Derogatory term to refer to a gay man: faggot. A descendant of the biblical character Lot, or the prophet Lot in Islam. Used in both popular and religious contexts.

*

من سلالة شخصية لوط التوراتية، أو النبي لوط في الإسلام. مصطلح ازدرائي يدل على رجل مثلي. تُستخدم في سياقات شعبية وكذلك في الأدبيات الدينية / الفقهية.

Nās al-Dunyā
ناس الدنيا

'Worldly folks': an oblique term for queer / LGBTQ+ people who enjoy living life to the fullest with all its pleasures.

*

عبارة تلميح للدلالة ضمنيا على أشخاص ينتمون إلى مجتمع الميم، تصورًا أنهم يقبلون على الحياة بكل ملذّاتها.

Maghrebi Dialects

*

لهجات بلاد المنطقة المغاربية

Algeria
الجزائر
(DZ)

Libya
ليبيا
(LY)

Morocco
المغرب
(MA)

Tunisia
تونس
(TN)

Anūsh
أنوش

(DZ)

'Effeminate youth'. Contemporary term that is less stigmatising than others, but still holds negative connotations.

*

شاب ذو سلوكيات انثوية. مصطلح معاصر الطف واقل وصمًا من غيره، وإن لم يزل يحمل دلالات سلبية.

Ishtaqtinī
إشتَقتِني

(TN)

Derived from the Arabic word for 'to yearn for'. Allegedly references a popular story of a gay man whose lover left. Derogatory term that refers to soft, effeminate or gay men. Used in conjunction with names of nuts, e.g. *ishtaqtini bi-l-fustuq* (pistachio-flavoured pansy), *ishtaqtini bi-l-lawz* (almond-flavoured softy), etc.

*

مشتقّة من الشوق؛ قد تحيل إلي حكاية شعبية عن رجل مثلي رحل عشيقه عنه؛ كلمة تحقيرية تُطلق على رجل ناعم مستضعف، يبدو مرتخيا أو مغنجا، يتباهى بطابعه أنثوي. تُقترن عند استخدامها بأسماء مكسرات على غرار: إشتقتني بالفستق، إشتقتني باللوز وغيره.

Al-Ḥājj Dhakar
الحاجّ ذَكَر

(LY)

'Sir Alpha'. *Ḥājj* is an honorific title given to a man who has completed pilgrimage, or to anyone older as a mark of respect. Used ironically for a masculine-presenting women to confer ironic respect: lesbian.

*

'حاجّ' لقب إجلال يُضفى على كل رجل أتم فريضة الحج أو تُستخدم لمخاطبة رجل بالغ في السن باحترام؛ تُطلق على امرأة ذات سلوكيات رجولية بحسب الأنماط الاجتماعية لتوقيرها بسخرية ، ما يوحي بأنها مثلية.

Baghl
بَغل

(LY)

Arabic for mule, the offspring of a male donkey and a female horse, typically sterile; derogatory term for gay men as they are not meant to copulate together, like donkeys and horses.

*

نسل ذكر الحمار وأنثى الفرس، وهو عقيم؛ كناية عن الرجال المثليين من حيث أنّ مجامعتهم 'مخالفة للطبيعة' كما مجامعة الحمار والفرس.

Bnīta
بْنيتة

(MA)

Diminutive form of *bint* (girl) in slang; derogatory term for boys considered 'soft' or effeminate by prevailing social norms.

*

تصغير كلمة بنت باللفظ المحكي؛ عبارة تحقيرية تُطلق على صبي ناعم و/أو ذو طابع أنثوي بحسب الأنماط الاجتماعية السائدة.

Būṭāna
بوطانة

(DZ) (LY)

Arabisation of the derogatory Italian word putana (slut/whore); used for a male or female sex worker (not exclusively to queers). Many Italian words entered Libyan slang as a result of Italy's colonisation of Libya.

*

تعريب *putana* الإيطالية التي تماثل شرموطة أو قحبة بالعربية لتحقير عاملات الجنس؛ تُطلق اليوم على عامل أو عاملة جنس بالمحكية (لا تقتصر على المثليين)؛ من اللافت أنّ الكثير من المفردات الإيطالية دخلت إلى العامية الليبية من جراء الاستعمار الإيطالي للبلاد.

Bofta
بوفته

(LY)

Arabisation of the British slur 'poofter' for an effeminate man assumed to be gay.

*

تعريب الكلمة التحقيرية *poofter* التي تُطلق في بريطانيا على رجل ذو طابع أنثوي يُفترض بانه مثلي.

Boya, pl. Boyāt
بوية، ج. بويات

(LY)

Arabisation and feminisation of the word 'boy', to refer to a queer woman or any woman with manly appearance or mannerisms (on the presumption that all queer woman are wannabe men). Most commonly used in the Gulf region.

*

تعريب كلمة *boy* أي صبي بالإنكليزية مع زيادة تاء التأنيث؛ تدلّ على امرأة مثلية أو أي امرأة ذات مظهر أو سلوكيات رجولية (على افتراض أن كل المثليات يتشبهن بالذكور). شائعة غالبًا في منطقة الخليج.

Pédé
بيدي

(DZ) (MA) (TN)

Derogatory word in French for gay or 'faggot', abbreviated from pederast, the Greek term for a man with a younger, usually adolescent boy lover. Common in Arabic-speaking countries that were colonised by France, including Lebanon, to refer a gay man in general.

*

كلمة فرنسية لتحقير شاب مثلي وهي اختصار لكلمة *pederast* المشتقة بدورها من الكلمة الإغريقية للشيخ الذي يتخذ الغلمان عشاقًا له. شائعة في البلدان الناطقة بالعربية التي خضعت للاستعمار الفرنسي بما في ذلك لبنان للدلالة على رجل مثلي بشكل عام.

Bayyūḍī
بيّوضي

(TN)

'Whiteish'; a light-skinned person; can be used to refer to a 'soft twink', on the perception that whiteness is associated with feminine beauty and softness, but is not exclusively used for gay men.

*

مشتقّة من البياض؛ ذو بشرة فاتحة؛ تدلّ على شاب مثلي ناعم صغير السن على افتراض أن البياض مقرون بالجمال (الأنثوي خصيصًا) والنعومة / الطراوة، إنما لا تنحصر بالمثليين.

Tabā'-l-dirr
تبّاع الذرّ

(DZ)

'He's into seeds': a derogatory term for gay men who like having younger sexual partners, on the assumption that they all tend towards paedophilia; equivalent to bazaranji in the Hejaz (see *Gulf* section).

*

'الذي يحبّذ البذور' مصطلح ازدرائي يماثل بزرنجي في منطقة الحجاز (انظروا باب الخليج) للدلالة على الرجال المثليين الذين يمارسون الجنس مع رجال أصغر سنًا، على افتراض أنهم جميعًا يتحرشون بالقاصرين.

Trāv
تراڤ

(TN)

Derogatory term for trans women or sex workers, derived from the French term *travelo*, with the same derogatory connotation.

*

مصطلح ازدرائي يُطلق على النساء العابرات، مشتق من كلمة *travelo* بالفرنسية ذات نفس الدلالة الازدرائية.

Tishsha
تِشّة

(TN)

Initially meant for prostitutes and other social 'outcasts'. Used nowadays to refer to effeminate gay men, queer women and trans women. Term used to be derogatory, but is now used among the community as a colloquial equivalent to 'sis'.

*

في الماضي كانت تُطلق (بازدراء غالبًا) على المومسات وغيرهنّ من الفئات 'المنبوذة' في المجتمع. أمّا في الوقت الحاضر فتتداول ضمن مجتمع الميم كمرادفة عامية لـ'اختي' لتدلّ على الرجال ذوي طابع انثوي والنساء الكويريات والعابرات.

Timsāḥ
تِمساح

(LY)

'Crocodile'; term that carries pedophilic connotations; used among queer men to refer to an older gay man who is attracted to twinks. The term is used in reference to the long life expectancy of crocodiles.

*

مصطلح يحمل دلالات شخص يتحرش بالقاصرين؛ تستخدم بين الرجال المثليين للإشارة إلى كهل مثلي ينجذب إلى الفتيان الناعمين؛ تحيل العبارة إلى أن التمساح عادةً يُعمّر طويلا.

Ḥāwī
حاوي

(TN)

Refers to infertile or impotent men on the assumption it makes them less manly; used as a general insult to describe anyone as 'not a real man', including gay men.

*

تدلّ على رجل عنين أو عقيم جنسيًا، مما ينتقص من رجولته؛ تُطلق مسبّةً على أيِ رجل للتقليل من رجولته بما في ذلك المثلي.

Ḥisān
حصان

(TN)

'Horse'. Used either to refer to a very masculine, virile and well-endowed gay man, or to refer to gay men who bottom, i.e. can be mounted like a horse, alluding to the power dynamic of the top dominating the bottom.

*

تدلّ على رجل مثلي ذو قضيب كبير وذكوري للغاية في اداءه الجندري، أو على الرجل الذي يتخذ دور السالب في الجنس المثلي (الشريك المفعول اي المولَج به الذي يسمّى *bottom* في الاصطلاح الشعبي)، كونه يُمتطى ويُركب كالحصان من قبل شريكه الذي يتخذ دور الموجب (الفاعل المولج بشريكه الذي يُسمى *top* في الاصطلاح الشعبي)، في إحالة إلى ديناميكية هيمنة الموجب على السالب كما يخضع الفارس فرسه.

Ḥaffār
حفّار

(TN)

'Digger': refers to the act of 'topping' in gay sex.

*

الشخص الذي يحفر أي يتخذ دور الموجب في الجنس المثلي.

Ḥakkāka
حكّاكة

(DZ)

A device for rubbing or scratching. Derogatory term to refer to queer women and lesbians in reference to how they are imagined to have sex.

*

آلة للحكّ والفرك. مصطلح ازدرائي يُطلق على النساء المثليات، تصوّرًا لكيفية ممارستهن الجنس مع بعض.

Ḥikkiya/Ḥikḥāk
حِكّية/حِكحاك

(LY)

'A can' in Libyan dialect: someone opened up like a can: a derogatory way to refer to a gay man who is a bottom.

*

علبة معدنية بالمحكية الليبية؛ كناية عن شخص 'يُفتح' كالعلبة أي يُولج به فتدلّ على الرجل الذي يتخذ دور السالب في الجنس.

Ḥallāj
حلّاج

(DZ)

'Cotton-carder': a gay man, 'faggot'.

*

من امتهن تخليص القطن من بذره؛ كناية عن رجل مثلي، مخنّث.

Ḥilillis
حِلِلس

(LY)

Of unclear etymology: a youth who looks 'soft', effeminate, or does not act masculine enough as per prevailing social norms: a milder, gentler version of *bofta* above.

*

مصطلح ازدرائي مماثل ل'بوفته' أعلاه إنما الطف وأخف وطأة يدلّ على شاب ذو مظهر وتصرفات ناعمة أشبه بالإناث منها بالذكور بحسب الأنماط الاجتماعية السائدة، مما يوحي بأنه مثلي؛ غير واضحة الاشتقاق.

Ḥalwa
حلوة

(DZ)

'Candy': used a slur for effeminate gay men for the obvious connotations of softness and sweetness.

*

مصطلح تحقيري يدلّ على الرجال المثليين ذوي طابع انثوي بتشبيههم بالحلواء لما تحمله الاستعارة من دلالات الميوعة والحلاوة.

Khishshāy
خِشّاي

(MA)

From the verb *yakhush*, 'to enter', in several dialects: refers to the someone who is usually the top in gay sex, since he 'enters' his partner. Paired with its opposite, *'aṭṭāy*, in popular slang.

*

خَشّ في الشيء دخل فيه بعدة عاميات؛ تدلّ على الشخص الذي دأب على اتخاذ دور الموجب في الجنس المثلي كونه يولج بشريكه؛ تُقترن بنقيضها عطّاي في اللسان الشعبي.

Khannūta/Khunthāwī/Khuntha/mukhannath
خَنوتة/خُنثاوي/خُنثة/مخنّث

(MA) (TN)

Widespread across the Arab world. Used today for someone transgender, or considered effeminate, sissy, androgynous; in pre-modern writings on sexuality in Arabic, the term refers to those exhibiting behaviour that would today lead them to being called transvestites, and who made a living off music; or those who would have physical sex characteristics that we would today call intersex. For further details, refer to Saqer Almarri's text.

*

مصطلح واسع الانتشار في المنطقة العربية يدلّ على شاب ذو طابع أو سلوكيات أنثوية، ناعم و/أو دلوع؛ من ي.تمتلك صفات أنثوية وذكورية في الوقت ذاته؛ بينجنسي.ة، عابر.ة الجنس. ترد العبارة في الأدبيات العربية القديمة حول الجنسانية لتدلّ على فتيان يتشبهون بالنساء في مظهرهم وسلوكهم ويعتاشون من الغناء والرقص. للمزيد من التفاصيل انظروا نصّ صقر المري في هذا المؤلّف حول هذا المصطلح ودلالته.

Khawal
خَوَل

(LY)

The *khawal* was a traditional native male dancer in Egypt who cross-dressed in feminine attire and was of a type popular up until the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. The word is now used as a slur like 'faggot', to refer offensively to any guy suspected of being effeminate and / or gay, presuming he is a bottom. Mostly used in Egypt but also in other Arabic-speaking countries.

*

كان الخول راقصًا شعبيًا في مصر يرتدي ملابس نسائية، وحظي بشعبية كبيرة حتى أواخر القرن الثامن عشر وبداية القرن التاسع عشر. تستخدم الكلمة الآن غالبًا في مصر ولكن كذلك في بلدان أخرى ناطقة بالعربية كشتيمة لتحقير كل شاب يُشتبه بأنه مثلي أو له طابع أنثوي، وعلى افتراض أنه يتخذ دور السالب في الجنس.

Dagg, pl. Dgāg
دَقّ، ج. دْقاق

(MA)

'To pound / hammer'. Used for a virile, hypermasculine man who is thought to have a large penis. Mostly used by trans women to talk about prospective lovers. Also heard in Kuwait.

*

يغلب تداولها بين النساء العابرات عند الإشارة إلى عشيق محتمل أو مرغوب؛ تدلّ على رجل فحل ذو طابع رجولي مفرط يُفترض أنه صاحب قضيب كبير؛ تُتداول أيضًا في الكويت.

Raḍḍā' Zbūb
رَضّاع زبوب

(TN)

'Cocksucker', taken from a derisive football chant 'Slim Chiboub raḍḍā' zbūb' directed at the head of the Espérance Sportive de Tunis FC by supporters of opposing teams; the term is now used to denigrate gay men as literal cocksuckers.

*

أطلق شعار 'سليم شيبوب رضّاع زبوب' على رئيس منتخب الترجي الرياضي الكُروي من قبل مشجعي خصوم المنتخب لقبًا تحقيريًا؛ اجتزئت العبارة لتُطلق على الرجال المثليين على افتراض أنهم يرضعون القضبان أي يمصّون السائل المنوي منها.

Ra'wānī
رَعواني

(MA)

An effeminate man, girly; gay.

*

رجل ذو طابع أنثوي شبيه بالبنات، ما يوحي بأنه مثلي.

Zāmil, pl. Zawāmil
زامل، ج. زوامل

(LY) (MA)

Gay, effeminate, faggot. Offensive term used across North Africa, possibly derived from *zamīl* (classmate/colleague/peer).

*

رجل مثلي، ذو طابع أنثوي وناعم، مخنث. عبارة تحقيرية قد تكون مشتقّة من كلمة زميل؛ شائعة في عموم شمال إفريقيا.

Shādh.a, pl. Shawādh
شاذّ.ة، ج. شواذّ

(TN)

Derogatory term to refer to a gay man: 'faggot'. Means 'deviant', i.e. sexually deviant from the norm.

*

مصطلح ازدرائي لشخص مثلي 'يشذّ' أي ينحرف عن القاعدة، كونه.ا لا ينجذب إلى الجنس الآخر. كان هذا هو المصطلح العلمي / الطبي 'المحايد' المعتمد في الأدبيات الرسمية الأنكلو-أميركية، ومنها انتقلت إلى العالم العربي، قبل شيوع 'مثلي'؛ شائع بلهجات عدة.

Shaqnūs.a
شقنوس.ة

(TN)

Colloquial word used to refer to the act of 'whisking' in food to make something mushy and soft. Refers to men who are considered spoilt and unreliable, such as people who come from very wealthy backgrounds, suggesting they may be gay. Term is also used to refer to queer and non-queer effeminate men.

*

كلمة دارجة لفعل الخفق في إعداد الطعام لجعل المادة طرية مائعة؛ تدلّ على الرجال العديمي القدرة الذين لا يمكن الاعتماد عليهم لعدم تمرّسهم في الحياة أو المدللين الذين ينتمون إلى طبقة الموسرين، ما يوحي بمثليتهم؛ تُطلق على المثليين وغير المثليين الذين لديهم سلوكيات أنثوية على حدّ سواء.

Shikshāka
شِكشاكة

(LY)

From the verb *shakshak*, to dance and 'shake it' in the dialect of Eastern Libya, as well as the sound made by someone wearing a lot of jewellery and accessories: refers to a flamboyant, effeminate gay man.

*

الشكشكة الرقص والتمايل بالدارجة المحلية في شرق ليبيا، كما تدلّ على صوت 'الخشخشة' الصادر من الشخص الذي يلبس الحلي وأدوات الزينة أثناء مشيته؛ تدلّ على رجل مثلي ذو طابع أنثوي متباهٍ بنفسه.

Shawwāya
شوّاية

(MA) (TN)

'Grill rack': refers to versatile gay men who flip over during sex, like meat on a grill.

*

تدلّ على الرجال المثليين الذين يتبادلون الأدوار مع شركائهم الجنسيين فيتقلبون كاللحم على الشواية.

Miyya w Sitta/ Cent-six
صون سيس/مية وستة

(DZ)

The number 106 in French and Arabic: refers to an Algerian film *Les Vacances de l'inspecteur Tahar*, from 1973. In a scene that takes place in a hotel, the inspector's deputy disguises himself as a woman housekeeper as they're going to room 106. As they are walking, the inspector asks him to walk in a more feminine way, and he takes a very feminine walk and yells with a feminine voice, in Arabic, '106!' And, ever since, '106' has become a slur that refers to gay, effeminate men.

*

الرقم ١٠٦ بالفرنسية؛ إحالة إلى الفيلم الجزائري عطلة المفتش الطاهر من عام ١٩٧٣. في أحد المشاهد التي تحدث في فندق، يتنكر معاون المفتش بزيّ عاملة تنظيف وهو يرافق المتفش إلى الغرفة ١٠٦. وهما يتجهان إلى الغرفة يطلب المفتش من مساعده أن يعدّل من مشيته كي يزيدها أنوثة، فيفعل وإذا به يصرخ بصوت أنثوي (بالعربية) 'مية وستة' فأصبح منذ ذلك الحين مصطلحًا إزدرائيًا يطلق (باللغتين) على الرجال المثليين ذوي السلوكيات الانثوية.

Ṭaffār
طفّار

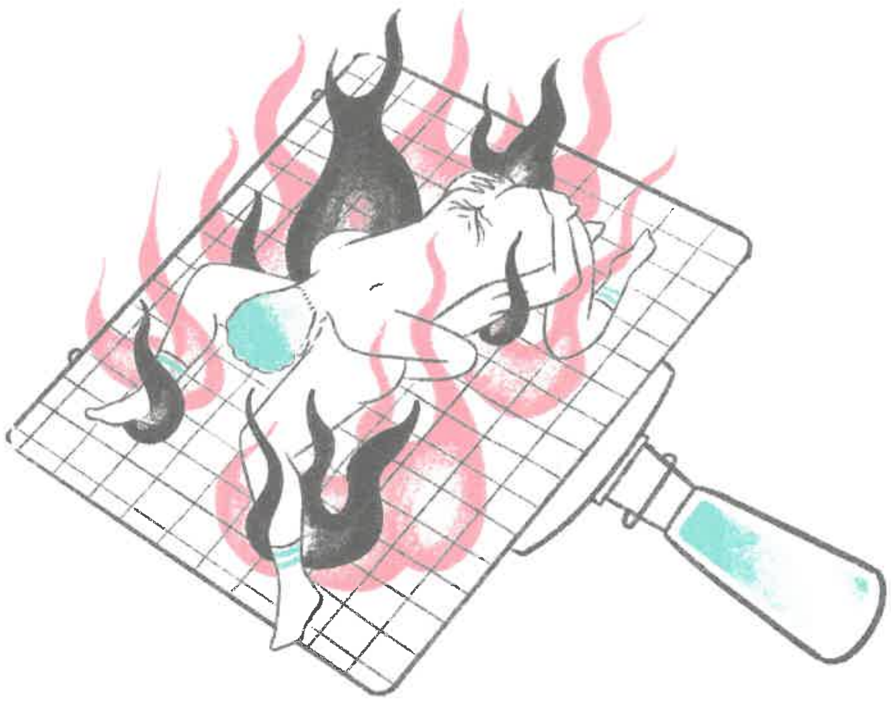
(TN)

Derived from colloquial word referring to the act of insertion. A hypermasculine man who engages in gay sex: dominant top. May carry connotations of paedophilia or rape. Paired with its opposite, *mībūn*, in popular slang.

*

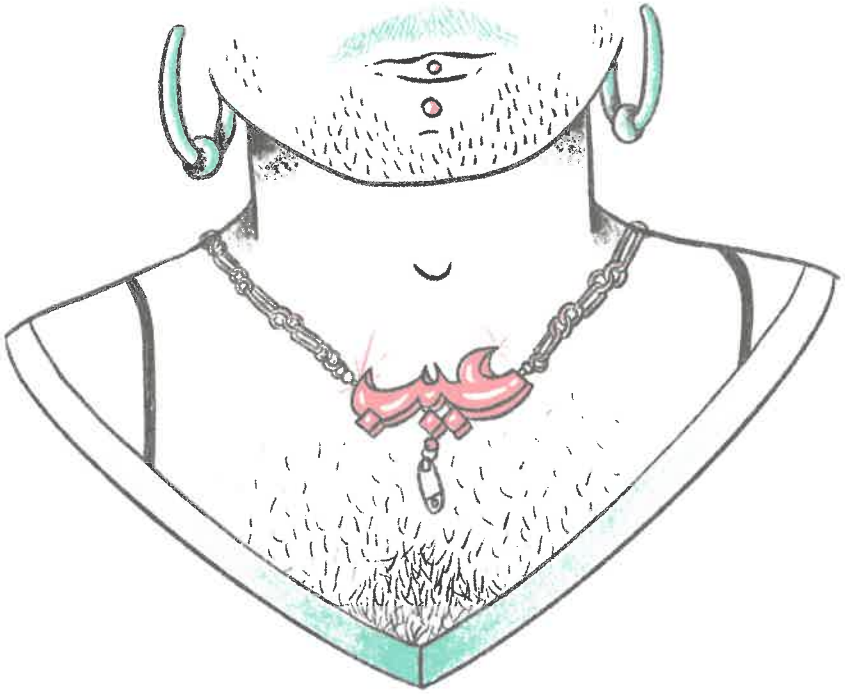
من يقوم بالإيلاج في الجنس المثلي؛ رجل ذو طابع ذكوري مفرط يمارس الجنس المثلي بدور الفاعل المهيمن؛ قد تحمل العبارة على دلالات الاغتصاب أو التحرش بالقاصرين؛ تُقترن في اللسان الشعبي بنقيضها ميبون.

شواية



Shawwāya

عنده العيبة



ʿIndo al-ʿAyba

ʿAṭṭāy
عَطّاي

DZ MA TN

'Giver'; the person who generously gives his body to someone, i.e. bottom, 'faggot'; paired with its opposite, *khishāy*, in popular slang.

*

مشتقة من العطاء أي الشخص الذي يعطي جسده للآخر بسخاء؛ تدلّ بازدراء على السالب في الجنس المثلي؛ تُقترن بنقيضها خشاي في اللسان الشعبي.

ʿIndo al-Dūda/ Tākul fīh al-dūda/ Mdawwid
عندو الدودة/تاكل فيه الدودة/مدوِّد

TN

'Has worms', 'wormy'; has worms in his anus that make him itch for sex, usually suggesting that he is a bottom; also in reference to the fallacy that gay men are riddled with disease.

*

مصاب بالديدان في مؤخرته التي 'ترعاه' ولا تدعه يصبر على النيك، ما يوحي عادة بأنه يتخذ دور السالب في الجنس المثلي. وكذلك إشارة ازدرائية إلى المغالطة القائلة بأن الرجال المثليين مصابين بشتى الأمراض.

ʿIndo al-ʿAyba/Fīh al-ʿAyba
عندو العَيبة/فيه العَيبة

MA

'He has the defect'; synonymous with *indo al-dūda* above; a gay bottom, with an ailment or defect in his ass that is only cured by intercourse.

*

مترادفة لعبارة 'عنده الدودة' أعلاه للسالب المثلي، بحيث الشخص المعني لديه داء في دبره لا يُشفى إلا بالمضاجعة.

ʿInayba
عنَيبة

MA

'Little grape' in colloquial language. Refers to men who don't display normative masculine behaviour; effeminate; gay. A gentler term compared to the highly offensive *zāmil*.

*

'حبة عنب صغيرة' بالدارجة؛ تُطلق على رجل ذو سمات أنثوية لا يتلاءم أداؤه الجندري ومعايير الذكورة المتعارف عليها فيُعتبر مثليًا أو مخنثًا؛ عبارة تُعتبر الطف من زامل المسيئة للغاية.

ʿAysha Rājil
عيشةْ راجل

DZ LY TN

'ʿAysha the man'; tomboy, woman with masculine mannerisms as per prevailing social norms; could refer to a lesbian.

*

'عائشة الرجل' فتاة تتسم بسلوكيات ذكورية بحسب الأنماط الاجتماعية السائدة، قد تدل على أنها مثلية.

Gouīna
غوينة

DZ MA

Arabisation of *gouine*, derogatory French slang for dyke; lesbian, reclaimed by the queer community in France and has also come to be commonly used within queer circles in North Africa.

*

تعريب كلمة *gouine* الفرنسية التي تدل بازدراء على امرأة مثلية باللسان الشعبي؛ أعيد استملاكها من قبل مجتمع الميم وكذلك باتت شائعة في أوساط الكويريين في المغرب العربي.

Fāmlāt
فاملات

(DZ)

Arabisation of the French *femmelette*, the diminutive of woman; an offensive term akin to 'pussy' meant to emasculate a man considered overly weak or effeminate, presuming that he is gay and thus inferior to women.

*

تعريب مصطلح *femmelette* الفرنسي، أي امرأة صغيرة؛ تحقيري مماثل لمخنّث للدلالة على رجل مستضعف يتشبه بالنساء افتراضًا بأنه مثلي وبالتالي أقلّ شأنًا من امرأة، بقصد الانتقاص من رجولته.

Firkh, pl. Frūkh
فرخ، ج. فروخ

(TN)

'Baby Chick': derogatory term similar to 'faggot', referring to (relatively younger) effeminate gay men for their tenderness; usually a bottom; widespread in Iraq.

*

كناية تحقيرية عن فتى مثلي صغير السن (نسبيًا) ذو سلوكيات أنثوية وملامح ناعمة فيشبّه بفرخ الطائر؛ عادةً يتخذ دور السالب في الجنس.

Firwākh/ Bitā' or Mtā' Frūkh
فرواخ/بتاع أو متاع فروخ

(LY)

Man who is attracted to and has sex with *frūkh* (younger men). May carry connotations of paedophilia.

*

رجل يحبذ ممارسة الجنس مع 'الفروخ' ويتخذ دور الفاعل أو الموجب في الجنس المثلي؛ قد تحمل العبارة على أنه متحرش بالقاصرين.

Fīh al-Rīḥa
فيه الريحة

(TN)

'He reeks of "it"': someone who leaves a strong impression that he is gay.

*

تفوح منه الرائحة أي رجل يوحي بشدّة أنه مثلي.

Fīh al-Fāra/La Petite Souris
فيه الفارة/لا بتيت سوري

(MA)

French for 'little mouse'. Insinuates that a gay/effeminate man has a mouse trapped in his anus, which is why he sways.

*

'الفأرة الصغيرة' بالفرنسية. تلمح العبارة إلى أنّ المثليين أو الرجال ذوي السمات الانثوية لديهم فأر عالق في مؤخرتهم، وهذا ما يتسبب في تمايلهم وهم يمشون.

Qāyiso-l-mā'
قايسو الماء

(MA)

'Touched by water': gay/effeminate man, one who is perceived as loose, which makes them liquefied or swaying, like water.

*

ممسوس بالماء؛ تدلّ على رجل مثلي او رجل ذو سمات أنثوية لأنه كالماء السائل غير جامد ومتماسك، ما يدلّ على انه مائع ومتراخ أي منحرف جنسيًا.

Qadīm.a Fī-l-mīdān
قديم.ة في الميدان

(TN)

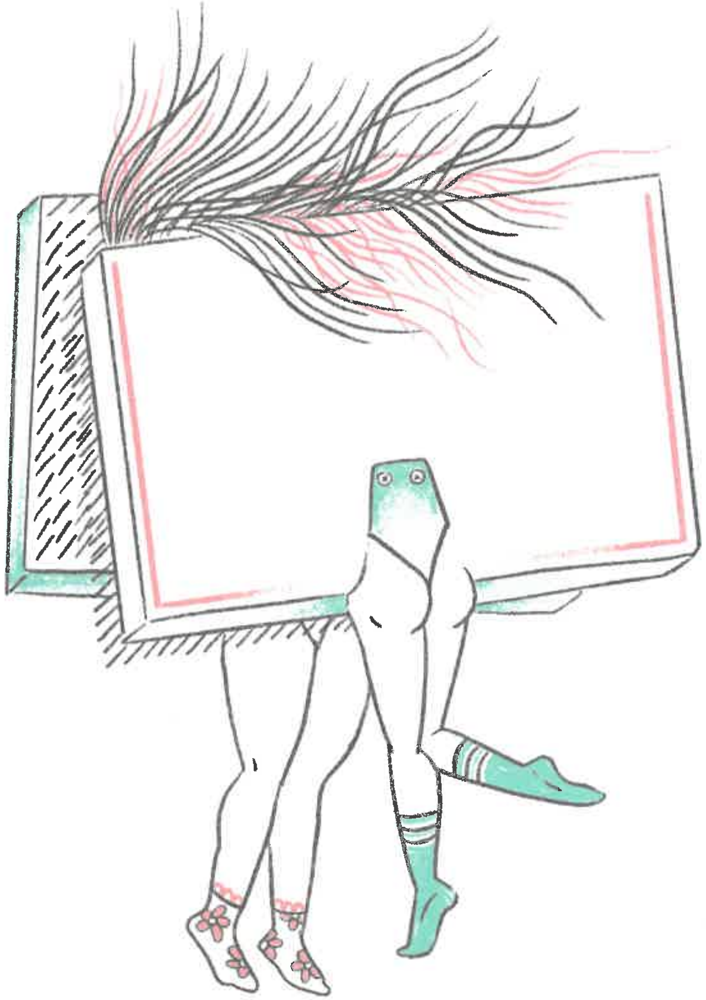
Someone known to have 'been around' (in the local queer community) for a long time. Usually belongs to an older generation.

*

واضحة الدلالة؛ شخص معروف بين مجتمع الميم أنه.ا مجرّب.ة؛ عادةً ينتمي إلى جيل متقدم في العمر.

Qāyiso-l-mā'

قرشالة



Qarshāla

Qardāsha
قَرداشة

(TN)

Traditional wooden tool used to filter wool to turn it into balls of yarn, composed of two parts that rub against each other. Used to refer to two gay men who are both bottoms and tops during sex; may also be used for lesbians.

*

أداة خشبية تقليدية تُستخدم لتنقية الصوف وتحويله إلى لفائف قابلة للغزل والحياكة، تتكون من طرفين لكل منها مقبض ويوضع الصوف بينهما ليحتك كلاهما بالآخر وتتكرر هذه العملية عدّة مرات حتى ينقى الصوف. تم استعارتها للدلالة بازدراء على رجليْن مثليين يتخذ كلاهما إمّا دور السالب إمّا الموجب أثناء المضاجعة؛ يمكن إطلاقها كذلك على النساء المثليات.

Qarshāla
قَرشالة

(MA)

Similiar to *qardāsha* above, but used instead for lesbians: a traditional wooden tool used to spin and weave wool, made up of two square-shaped 'handles' that are coarse and full of sharp points, which are placed on top of one another and made to rub against each other repeatedly; it has come to stand in for a gay woman, because in popular sexual imaginary the tool is likened to the tufty mons pubis of a girl, and the movement is imagined to be akin to how two women have sex.

*

شبيهة بقرداشة أعلاه إنما تُطلق على المثليات؛ أداة خشبية تقليدية مربعة الشكل كانت تُستخدم قديمًا لغزل الصوف، تتكون من 'كفَّيْن' على شكل مربّع مسنّنيْن يوضع أحدهما فوق الآخر ثم يحتكّان ببعض، تُكرّر هذه العملية حتى ينتج عنها الصوف؛ صارت الأداة تدلّ على المثليات تصوّرًا لكيفية ممارستهنّ الجنس مع بعضهنّ البعض أسوة بحركتها وكونها تُشبّه في المخيال الجنسي الشعبي بعانة البنت المزغبة.

Gayza
قَيزة

(LY)

Arabisation of the word 'gays' with the feminine particle added; refers to gays in general, and used as a term of endearment within the community and among male sex workers. Within a local Libyan context, refers specifically to drag queens who perform in secret parties, and are given cover by local militiamen who protect them from government authorities.

*

تعريب كلمة *gays* أي مثليين بالإنكليزية مع زيادة تاء التأنيث؛ تدلّ على المثليين بشكل عامّ ويتداولها أفراد مجتمع الميم وعاملي الجنس الذكور بين بعض من باب التحبب، إنما (في سياق ليبي تحديدًا) تدلّ على فناني الاستعراض المعروفين 'بملكات الجرّ' (الدراغ) الذين يحيون حفلات سرية بغطاء من قادة الميليشات لحمايتهم من ملاحقة السلطات.

Ka-yitkāl/Ta-Yitkāl (varies regionally)
كَيتكال/تَيتكال (بحسب اللهجة المحلية)

(MA)

'He gets eaten', in colloquial language; a gay man.

*

رجل 'يؤكل' بالدارجة أي أنه مثلي.

Karyoka
كَريوكة

(TN)

An effeminate man whose gestures and movements resemble those of the famous Egyptian belly dancer Tahiya Carioca.

*

ذو طابع أنثوي، تشبه حركاته وسلوكياته الراقصة المصرية الشهيرة تحيّة كاريوكا.

Ka'ka
كعكه

LY

Arabisation of 'cake'; in the Libyan context, refers specifically to a doughnut-shaped sweet and also euphemistically to the anus; a gay bottom.

*

تعريب كلمة *cake* أي قالب الحلوى بالإنكليزية؛ في السياق الليبي اسم لنوع من الحلويات بعينه شكله مدوّر مثقوب بالوسط شبيه بالدونات؛ كناية عن حلقة الشرج وتدلّ على رجل يتخذ دور السالب في الجنس المثلي.

Kawāl
كَوال

LY

Arabisation of the Italian *cavallo* or knight, also the Jack in Italian playing cards, where he is always illustrated as a well-groomed man; a recent addition to Libyan slang for effeminate or gay men.

*

تعريب الكلمة الإيطالية *cavallo* أي فارس؛ تُطلق كذلك على ورقة الشاب في ترتيب أوراق الشدة (الكوتشينة) الإيطالية حيث يتم تصويره دائمًا كشاب أنيق مهندم؛ دخلت حديثًا إلى العامية الليبية للدلالة على رجل مثلي أو ذو طابع أنثوي.

Lā Ho Lā Ho
لا هو لا هو

TN

'Neither this nor that', i.e. neither man nor a woman; someone whose gender presentation is ambiguous, and referencing the discomfort that they create.

*

ليس هو برجلاً ولا بامرأة؛ شخص له أداء جندري مبهم، مما يجعله محط ريبة.

Lizbūna
لِزبونة

TN

Arabisation of 'lesbian' with the addition of the feminine particle; an affectionate way of referring to a lesbian.

*

تعريب كلمة *lesbian* مع زيادة تاء التأنيث؛ عبارة تحبب إلى امرأة مثلية.

Lūbya
لوبيا

MA

'Cowpea'/'white bean'. Used by the younger generation in the LGBTQ+ community to refer to each other.

*

مصطلح يتداوله أفراد مجتمع الميم من جيل الشباب للإشارة إلى بعضهم البعض.

Mbannat
مبَنّت

MA

'Girlified'; effeminate, acts like a girl, suggesting he is gay.

*

شاب ذو طابع أنثوي، يتصرف كالبنات، ما يوحي بأنه مثلي.

Madām
مَدام

TN

'Madame'; formal way to address a married woman in French. Used to refer to an effeminate gay man, particularly from an older generation.

*

لقب رسمي لمخاطبة امرأة متزوجة بالفرنسية؛ تُطلق على رجل مثلي ذو طابع أنثوي، خاصة ينتمي إلى جيل متقدم في العمر.

لوبيا

Lūbya

Mrāwī
مْراوي

(TN)

'Woman-y'; an effeminate man, sissy-acting, thus considered gay because he acts like a woman.

*

شبيه بامرأة باللغة الدارجة؛ تدلّ على رجل ناعم ودلوع، ذو طابع أو سلوكيات أنثوية، فيُعتبر مثليًا.

Mrajjla/Mistarjila
مرجّلة/مِسترجِلة

(LY) (MA)

'Mannish'. Tomboy, woman with masculine mannerisms, which may hint that she's gay.

*

فتاة تتشبه بالرجال في سلوكياتها أو ذات طابع رجولي، ما يوحي بأنها قد تكون مثلية.

Markhūf
مْرخوف

(TN)

'Liquid' or 'loose and swaying'; denotes a weak or spoiled person; effeminate.

*

الجسم الذائب أو المرتخي المتمايل، تدلّ على رجل ذو طابع أنثوي و/أو مستضعف ومدلّع.

Mraywa
مْرَيوَة

(DZ)

Derived from *imra'a* (Arabic for woman) used in the diminutive form in colloquial language to belittle women; synonymous with *mrāwī* above.

*

تصغير لكلمة امرأة بالدارجة؛ تُطلق على رجل ذو طابع أنثوي وكذلك امرأة بقصد التقليل من شأنها؛ مترادفة لكلمة مراوي أعلاه.

Mishlāṭ/Yitmashlaṭ
مِشلاط/يِتمَشلَط

(LY)

A colloquial term to indicate someone who uses exaggerated hand gestures when talking; refers to a flamboyantly effeminate or gay man.

*

عبارة عامية تدلّ على شخص يبالغ في 'الشوبرة' بيديه أثناء الكلام؛ تدلّ على رجل مثلي يتباهى بميوله و/أو بطابعه الأنثوي.

Mḍarras.a
مضرّس.ة

(TN)

Derived from *ḍirs* (the molar tooth). Indicates someone who has 'cut their teeth' on something, is used to doing it regularly; in this context it refers to an older queer man or woman considered to be well seasoned, whether in terms of sexual experience or otherwise / more broadly speaking, in the queer community.

*

مشتقّة من سنّ الضرس؛ تدلّ على شخص مجرّب.ة محنّك.ة في أمر ما وكأنه.ا ذاقه ومضغه مرارًا بأضراسه.ا، ما معناه مجازيًا أنه.ا اعتاد.ت فعله؛ تدلّ في هذا السياق على رجل أو امرأة مثلية أو كويرية بالغ.ة في السن تُعتبر مخضرم.ة ولها باع طويل في مجتمع الميم سواء كان في التجارب الجنسية أو بشكل عامّ.

Mharris
مهَرّس

(MA)

'Broken up', 'pulverised' in colloquial language; refers to the bottom in gay sex.

*

مكسّر أو مهروس باللغة الدارجة؛ الرجل الذي يتخذ دور السالب في الجنس المثلي.

Musṭāsha
موسطاشة

(MA)

Arabisation of 'moustache'; refers to a moustached woman, i.e. a woman with masculine mannerisms or a 'strong' woman; can also refer to a butch lesbian.

*

تعريب كلمة *moustache* أي الشارب مع زيادة تاء التأنيث للدلالة على المرأة 'المشوربة'؛ تُطلق على امرأة تمتلك سمات رجولية؛ قد تدلّ كذلك على مثلية 'مسترجلة' التي تُسمّى *butch* بالاصطلاح الشعبي.

Mībūn
مِيبون

(LY) (MA) (TN)

The passive partner or bottom in gay sex, usually a younger man; from classical Arabic, for someone with a defect because he desires men; used in some dialects as an all-purpose insult. Paired with its opposite, *ṭaffār*, in popular slang.

*

مابون باللهجات المغاربية (خُفّفت الهمزة لتصبح ياء)؛ من به أُبنة أي عيب أو داء لأنه يشتهي أن يأتيه الرجال؛ كلمة فصيحة قديمة تُستعمل كمسبّة ببعض اللهجات لوصم شخص؛ الغلام الذي يولج به؛ السالب في الجنس المثلي. تُقترن في اللسان الشعبي بنقيضها طفّار.

Nānā
نانا

(TN)

Colloquial term of endearment for a grandmother, derived from French word of the same meaning. Refers to an older gay man or 'queen'.

*

عبارة تحبب للجدّات بالفرنسية؛ تدلّ بالمحكية على رجل مثلي بالغ السن ذو طابع أنثوي يتصنع وقار سيدات المجتمع.

Nuṣṣ Nuṣṣ
نُصّ نُصّ

(TN)

'Half/half.' i.e. half man, half woman. Borrowed from the name of a popular coffee drink in Morocco which is half milk half coffee, like a cortado; similar to *lā ho lā ho* above to describe someone with ambiguous gender presentation and the discomfort that raises.

*

'نصف نصف' بالمحكية؛ مستعارة من طريقة إعداد القهوة شبيهة باللاتيه المركّز، حيث يتكون نصف المشروب من القهوة والنصف الآخر من الحليب؛ شبيهة بِ لاهو لاهو أعلاه لوصف شخص له.ا أداء جندري مبهم وتعبيرًا عن الريبة التي يثيرها.

Naqsh
نَقش

(DZ)

Offensive term for a gay man; may be derived from classical Arabic *naqīsh* meaning 'same', i.e. 'homo'.

*

كلمة تحقيرية تُطلق على رجل مثلي؛ قد تكون مشتقّة من النّقيش بالفصحى أي المِثْلُ.

Nayyāk
نَيّاك

(TN)

'Fucker'; from *nīk*, classical Arabic for penetrative sex, also used in several dialects for fucking; someone who fucks frequently and vigorously; top.

*

واضح الدلالة، مشتقة من نيك، الكلمة الفصيحة القديمة لممارسة الجنس (الإيلاجي) والتي تُستعمل في عدة لهجات؛ على وزن فعّال للدلالة على الكثرة والمبالغة؛ تدلّ على الشريك الموجِب في الجنس المثلي (والغيري) الذي ينيك بعنفوان وبشكل مكثّف.

موسطاشة

Mustāsha

Yatalaswan
يتَلَسْوَن

(LY)

Colloquial word referring to a fluid material, like oil. Refers to a man who gesticulates with his hands in a feminine way while talking, which makes him seem effeminate or 'less of a man' as per the normative, so he is assumed to be gay.

*

كلمة عامية تدلّ على مادة سائلة كالزيت؛ تصف الرجل الذي 'يشوبر بيديه' عندما يتحدث إذ يحرّكهما بطريقة تجعله يبدو 'ناقص الرجولة' أو ذو طابع أنثوي من منظور الأنماط السائدة، فيُفترض أنه مثلي.

Yirḥam ʿAmmī
يرحم عمّي

(TN)

'May my uncles rest in peace', a backhanded way to express one's disgust at gay men by expressing nostalgia for the old days, when men were 'real men'.

*

تدلّ على الرجال المثليين تعريضًا بهم، من خلال التلميح إلى الحنين إلى 'أيام زمان' عندما كان الرجال 'ذكورًا حقيقيين' إنما تفيد باشمئزاز القائل من المثليين، على أساس أنهم ظاهرة حديثة.

Yismaʿ Fī-l-Kpop
يسمع في ال Kpop

(LY)

'Listens to K-pop': similar to awlād Mīkī in Sudan: men who listen to foreign popular music like K-pop are perceived as effeminate, emasculated, gay.

*

مصطلح شبيه بأولاد ميكي في السودان؛ ال *k-pop* لون موسيقي شعبي من كوريا والرجل الذي يستمع إليها أو إلى شبيهها من موسيقى أجنبية راقصة يُعتبر ناقص الرجولة، مختنثا وبالتالي مثلياً.

Yaqlī
يَقلي

(TN)

'He fries'. Fried food is common in Tunisian cuisine, and in this metaphor the man is being 'fried', and the oil in the frying pan represents dicks. Multiple versions of the term exist, such as 'He'll fry regardless of whichever side you'll flip him,' which refers to versatile gay men or bisexual men, and 'frying in dick', which refers to the bottom.

*

للماكولات المقلية شعبية كبيرة في تونسي؛ استعارة للرجل الذي يقلى بزيت القضبان. توجد تنويعات عدّة للمصطلح، فالشخص السالب في الجنس المثلي 'يقلي في الزبوب' ويقال عن ثنائي الجنس أو الذي يحبّذ تبادل الأدوار مع شركاؤه الجنسيين 'وين ما تحطو يقلي'.

Ylutṭ/Fīh-i-laṭṭa
يِلُطّ/فيه اللَطّة

(LY)

A variation of *lūṭī* (sodomite). To act in a way that is perceived as gay; for example, a man who is acting in a suspiciously affectionate way with a male friend.

*

تنويع عن لوطي؛ رجل يتصرف بشكل يثير الشكوك حول ميوله، مثلا أن يبالغ في التودد لصديق وإظهار العاطفة له مما يجعلهما محطّ ريبة بأنهما مثليان.

Ynukh
ينَخ

(TN)

Someone who 'gives their ass away', i.e. the penetrated partner in anal sex; in the Levant, the same word means to bend over with one's head.

*

من يمنحك طيزه أي الشخص المولج به في الجنس الشرجي؛ تعني الانحناء بالرأس بلهجات بلاد الشام.

ANCESTRIES

Hamed Sinno

Short vowels, *tashkeel*, were not historically written in Arabic, and readers instead knew how to pronounce different words based on a combination of memory and context clues. Because the same sequence of Arabic consonants can have vastly different meanings depending on how said sequence is animated by the *tashkeel*, the written language was incomplete without the readers' embodied investment in the text. To this day many texts are published in Arabic without *tashkeel* because they are not considered letters per se.

Some have suggested that this dates back to the language of the Ancient Egyptians. For them, writing words without vowels emphasised the fact that words have tremendous magical power, and that this power draws in part from the words' connection to voice and breath. It was the reader who connected the words, and by doing so brought them to life. According to author and musicologist Jeffrey Pulver, 'a certain series of seven sacred tones or vowels were employed for religious music. These appear to have been used exclusively by the priestly clan [...] whether they were forms of vocalisation or modes pure and simple.'[1] Vowels were seen as particularly potent sources of magic. It's interesting to think of how these phonetic distinctions relate to breath. 'Whereas vowels are pronounced from the vocal cords with minimal shaping of expelled breath, consonant sounds are created through obstruction or channelling of the breath by the lips, teeth, tongue, throat, or nasal passage.'[2] It would appear then that it is the breath in language, the life force, that was considered the source of magic. Writing about one possible origin for this belief, author and Egyptologist Geraldine Pinch writes:

1 Jeffrey Pulver, 'The Music of Ancient [illegible]

2 [illegible] 2003, p.66

> In Memphite Theology, [...] [the creator god] Ptah becomes aware of his loneliness and creates other deities from his divine essence. He does this by the 'thoughts of his heart and the words of his mouth'. The Egyptians thought of the heart as the seat of intelligence. Ptah imagines other beings in his heart and wills them into existence. The spoken word, the power of creative utterance, is an essential part of summoning gods and people into being.[3]

3 [illegible]

We could pursue this vector to conclude that, for the Ancient Egyptians, the value of words surpassed communication. After all, Ptah's words preceded an audience and, therefore, in the absence of a community to share language with, the words preceded communication. Ptah was alone, voicing non-communicative sounds that brought the universe into being. It is humbling to

know that as far back as the moment of creation – or at least as far back as when the Egyptians imagined that moment – people understood that on some level the voice was a way to cure one's sorrow, and to heal another's. In the Bible, God *says* 'Let there be x' for x to come into existence. In the Qur'an, God similarly speaks existence into being. The Om mantra, which brought the universe into being, traces the vocal tract from the throat to the lips. The voice has world-making power.

In the more conservative parts of my father's family, the voice had eternal repercussions. One of my earliest childhood memories is of my aunt describing to me what it would feel like to eternally burn in hell for singing. True story. Naturally, there are contradictory exegetic approaches in the interpretation of the relevant Qur'anic verses, and of the Hadith. The twelfth Umayyad caliph, Yazīd ibn al-Walīd ibn ʿAbd al-Malik, famously[4] declared:

إياكم والغناء، فإنه ينقص الحياء ويزيد في الشهوة ويهدم المروءة وإنه لينوب عن الخمر ويفعل ما يفعل السكر، فإن كنتم لا بد فاعلين فجنبوه النساء، إن الغناء داعية الزنا.

'Stay away from *ghina* [singing] because it reduces modesty, and increases libidinousness. It destroys one's virility and verily leads one to alcohol, and does what drunkenness does. Thus, if you are led into music, then at least keep it away from women, for singing leads to adultery.'[5]

4 To be clear, I had [illegible]

5 [illegible] Al-Mashhur [illegible] *Wa Huwa Mukhtasar* [illegible], Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-ʿIlmiyyah, 2002.

6 Sahih al-Bukhari 952, Chapter 3: The legal way of the celebrations on the two Eid festivals, Book 13: The Two Festivals (Eids).

In common parlance, singing is what happens when the voice meets a melody. But for some schools of Islamic thought, there exists an ontological difference separating halal unions of melody, text and breath from the haram singing. Singing, *ghina'*, is what happens when one musicalises secular language, when the voice becomes 'the devil's horn'.[6] This explains why *tajweed*, a set of conventions for reciting the Qur'an, is halal despite closely resembling singing. The Muslim call to prayer is profoundly melodious, and certain forms of what we would call singing are also halal. One example is *madeeḥ*, which is singing in praise of God and the prophet.

One way of understanding this is to deduce that the choice of words converts the vocalisation from acceptable to damnable. However, secular language is obviously not damnable when it is spoken. It is therefore the vocalisation that changes the language from *ḥalal* to sin. In this paradigm it is not the words themselves but the ecstasy of song and music that threatens to lead a person astray. The sin is in the joy.

It is the vocalisation that changes the language from *ḥalal* to sin...it is not the words themselves but the ecstasy of song and music that threatens to lead a person astray. The sin is in the joy.

On some foundational level, I grew up understanding that the use of my voice, and the use of language were separate things. The day my aunt warned me of my eternal damnation was the day I learned that singing, what I do with my vowels, has the power to make the phonebook an offence against God. That was also the day I learned that joy is a weapon.

[illegible]

My blood taught me hell
Cut from the book
pages that read
rivers of milk and honey
Crammed them into our mouths
told us to chew till we
dammed the hunger.
The less bread we made
The more gold they gave

My distended aunt
in the wicked heat
of a Lebanese summer
effaces herself
A face in
a snowcapped mountain –
sweat frosted –
under white polyblend veils,
over thick black coats

She taught me hell
Rivers of flesh
melting
off eight-year-old bones
for, as long as forever,
Restitution
for the wickedness
of singing.[7]

7 From *Westerly Breath: An Opera* by H. Samo

'It destroys one's virility and verily leads one to alcohol, and does what drunkenness does.' Virility. In early Islamic times, the term *mukhannathun* was used to refer to males who worked as dancers, musicians, entertainers and singers, especially those musicians who also wrote poetry, often critical of the political leadership of the time. In contemporary Arabic, the word is a slur against queer men, often used derogatorily to describe gender non-conforming people, with varied conjugations meaning 'hermaphrodite', 'bottom', 'femme', or just 'homosexual'.

To think, the word used as a slur against queer and genderqueer men was initially intended to be a slur against musicians, especially those who blow the devil's horn. The point is, we've always been told that God hated some of our bodies because they felt love a certain way, or because they created joy in a certain way. Queer love refuses what the Cuban academic José

Muñoz calls 'straight time', the time of procreative progress. Music creates joy by spinning time into sound.

The story goes that, at some point, the Caliph decided to round up the *mukhannathun*, and sentenced them all to castration. They laughed like jackals. One of them said this is simply a second circumcision we must endure, another saying they could finally 'become real women' (death to truscum, though). One of them thanked the Caliph for sparing them the burden of carrying around a spout for urine, and another asked him, 'What use would I have for an unused weapon anyway?'

I suppose it shouldn't have surprised me, but it did, that growing up I only heard about how singing was haram, and how 'my culture' spurned it, but not about those from my culture who were themselves spurned, who have always been there, or here, and will never not be here. Instead, I was in New Hampshire when I first read about the *mukhannathun* at court, led by the most famous *mukhannath* in Islamic history, Tuways. In Hanover NH, probably the waspiest town in America, I found my ancestors, a sassy band of singing gender traitors. At thirty-four, I accidentally healed some of my earliest childhood trauma, and the chasm my aunts wedged between me and my own brownness, by accidentally stumbling upon an archive.

8 [illegible]

A Rich Constellation of Identities

Saqer Almarri

First Cluster

Many years ago, I embarked on an archive trip; I wanted to find a copy of a specific manuscript. It was copied in Cairo during the 1300s, and eventually it would become the foundation of my scholarship. The manuscript was of a book of jurisprudence involving matters related to the figure of the *khuntha*. I worked with a librarian to locate this valuable resource. The title, which contained the word *khuntha*, troubled the librarian. He did not say anything about it to me, but I noticed something interesting: he avoided reading the title after the first time, when he had hesitated then skipped over the word *khuntha* as if it were an unsavoury term. This avoidance of the word sounded a lot like a hesitation and a skip that one might take when spotting a stagnant puddle on a street.

I was confused at first, but then I thought perhaps he thought it was a slur, just as the word *khanith* was in the region. This experience underscored the complex relationships people have with words that have meanings associated with gender and sexuality. Noticing it encouraged me to dig deeper to understand what was going on and why people react the way they do to these words.

You see, the word *khuntha* was the classical Arabic term for what we would now call an 'intersex person', or a person with differences in their sexual development. These are quite typical variations in people's sexual physiology that are common in humans. Occasionally in the classical writings, we find that the word *khuntha* is used also for people whose variation manifests in their gender expression and identity. I often translate *khuntha* to 'intersex', but I do not restrict it to that word alone; it may just as well be translated to 'non-binary' or 'agender' or 'genderfluid'. In many ways, *khuntha*, like other words under the *kha-nun-tha* root, forms an umbrella term to encompass a diverse range of possibilities.

Initially, I found it quite frustrating to see how writers, academics and people in general confused these distinct words and their meanings. The way I saw it, each word possessed a unique nuance that deserved separate consideration. However, the more I spent time thinking and wondering about it, the more I realised something else was going on. It is true that the librarian skipped over the word *khuntha* as if it were truly derogatory, and that this may have been a matter of stigma and prejudice. In fact, I often get asked why I work on such topics, because the topic itself causes such discomfort for people comfortable with the status quo of gender and sexuality.

Yet, the question lingered: why would someone feel compelled to write about the figure of the *khuntha*? Why would these (often) men write about them? An uncomfortable truth dawned on me: queer people, people whose expressions of gender and sexuality varied from the norm, were viewed as objects to be used in epistemological enterprises or discarded. They did not appear to most of these writers as individuals who could possibly have their own complex identities and dynamic lives to live. This realisation strengthened my commitment to investigate these topics while pushing against homophobic, queerphobic and transphobic prejudices and biases that have persisted for far too long.

Second Cluster

For about a decade, I immersed myself in exploring how gender was conceptualised in our Arabic and Islamic traditions. In my research, I scrutinised words that are formed from the Arabic triliteral root *kha-nun-tha*. While it may seem too academic for some, it became an exciting adventure for me that has led me to the orbit of some exciting ideas. In my research, I focus primarily on the word *khuntha*, and how writers writing about the figure of the *khuntha* have used the word in their writings.

As my questions around the word *khuntha* developed, I found that my research topic had grown into a study of a rich constellation of words that are derived from *kha-nun-tha*, and the exciting and multifaceted meanings around these words. It has led me to explore a trove of primary sources, and a wealth of academic literature about these ideas. I have been able to delve into the nuances of using these words, and I have deepened my understanding of their meanings and significance within the broader context of Arabic culture and Islamic traditions.

I will guide you through a brief orbit in this constellation of ideas that can offer us insights about our ongoing dialogues and discussions that we are having about gender and its construction in our intellectual traditions. The numerous iterations, repetitions, re-articulations of words sharing this common root, the *kha-nun-tha*, piqued my interest. It prompted me to consider not only their distinct qualities, but also the similarities between them, and to reflect on the writers, thinkers, translators and academics, all who contemplate sexual and gender variation in their own societies. We find many words related to this root that concern gender and sexual identities: *mukhannath*, and sometimes *mukhannith*, and *khuntha* are all variations common in the sources of our intellectual and literary traditions. We find a

...My research topic had grown into a study of a rich constellation of words that are derived from *kha-nun-tha*, and the exciting and multifaceted meanings around these words.

variation of depictions of gender and sexual minorities, from the celebratory stories about a class of effeminate, bejewelled bards to homophobic insults used against the heterodox theologians who challenged theological doctrines.

"أخنث من هيت/طويس/دلال"

More effeminate than Hit/Tuways/Dalal:
an Arabic proverb of the most famous
mukhannathun of the classical period

1 Everett Rowson, 'The Effeminates of Early Medina', *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, 1991.

These terms are not unique to the 'classical' Arabic and Islamic traditions, they also exist in our everyday life. Many of us who grew up in the Gulf can remember well when we've been called *khanith* as a slur against who we were. In fact, I found that most Arabic-speaking cultures have a relationship with the *kha-nun-tha* root, so that there are variations to such words everywhere.

I once spoke about my research in a panel and, following it, I was approached by a colleague who underscored for me the significance of the *kha-nun-tha* words in our everyday life. They shared a story from their youth when they witnessed a classmate being taunted as a *khintaya*, yet another derivative of this root. This multifaceted linguistic landscape led me to dig even deeper into the connections that connect these terms. I examined not only their specific definitions, but also their broader contexts in the culture and society where they are used.

Third Cluster

Just as these words are related through their *kha-nun-tha* root, their meanings can often be intertwined. I found this to be a challenge to discerning their individual connotations. Intriguingly, one dictionary offered a unique explanation to this linguistic phenomenon: the *kha-nun-tha* root also related to the blending of tastes when various foods spoil in the same vessel.

"اعلم أن الخنثى ... مأخوذ من قولهم خنث الطعام إذا اشتبه أمره
فلم يخلص طعمه المقصود وشارك طعم غيره..."
عبد الرحيم الإسنوي في إيضاح المشكل في أحكام الخنثى المشكل

'Know that the *khuntha* ... is derived from the usage *khanatha al-ta'am* [the food changed taste] when describing food that has spoiled and no longer maintained a pure taste because it mixed with the taste of another.' Al-Isnawi, my translation.²

2 Abd al-Rahim [illegible] p. 75.

The intermingling of meanings becomes evident in translations of these texts, which further complicates the interpretive processes of distinguishing between them. In a conference once, I spoke about a curious fact when Annemarie Schimmel translated the same line of mystical poetry twice, once in 1979 and another in 1982. The translation shifted from *hermaphrodite* to *catamite*, two very different terms that could be back-translated into Arabic as *khuntha* and *mukhannath*. We can see the root, *kha-nun-tha*, in these terms.

"طالب الدنيا مؤنث، طالب الآخرة مخنث، طالب المولى مذكر"
جمال الدين هانسوي

'The seeker of the world is feminine, the seeker of the other world is a hermaphrodite, and the seeker of the Lord is masculine.' Annemarie Schimmel's translation in 1979.

'The seeker of the world is feminine, the seeker of the world is a catamite, and the seeker of the Lord is masculine.' Annemarie Schimmel's translation in 1982.³

3 Annemarie Schimmel [illegible] *Women's Studies* [illegible]

Fourth Cluster

The words that derive from the *kha-nun-tha* root refer to diverse matters, but it is not uncommon for people who uphold the norms of cis-heterosexuality to perceive these diverse variations of gender and sexuality as abnormal all the same. This perception leads for very erroneous and damaging assumptions that anything deviating from the norms as inherently the same problem that must be stamped out. Stigma, bigotry, prejudice and violence are by-products of this line of thinking.

These expressions of bigotry and prejudice are nothing new. In July 1860, Christopher Rigby, serving as the British Consul to Zanzibar, wrote in a report about 'numbers of sodomites' who

arrived from Muscat. Even older yet, Ibn Taymiyya, who died in 1328, repeatedly dismissed a variety of religious sects and theological groups as *makhanith*. Over and over again, in his *Fatawa* and his other writings, he called his rival theologians *makhanith*. One might question whether he was homophobically likening them to the *makhanith*, who in his *Istiqama* were references to the adorned effeminate singers of the Umayyad period, or whether he is drawing upon the idea of the intermingling that is associated with the *kha-nun-tha* root. Regardless of his intentions (although I am sure they are homophobic), such language does show us how prejudice permeates all sorts of discussions, both everyday matters and intellectual matters alike.

"الأشعرية مخانيث المعتزلة والمعتزلة مخانيث الفلاسفة"
ابن تيمية في الفتاوى الكبرى
"فالمعتزلة في الصفات مخانيث الجهمية"
ابن تيمية في الحسنة والسيئة

'The Ash'ariyya are the *makhanith* of the Mu'tazila, and the Mu'tazila are the *makhanith* of the Greek philosophers.' Ibn Taymiyya, my translation.

'The Mu'tazila in matters of the divine attributes are the *makhanith* of the Jahmiyya.' Ibn Taymiyya, my translation.

It is possible that the root cause of such damaging assumptions come from a lack of introspection and self-reflection by cis-heterosexual people. By failing to explore their own biases and notions, they may inadvertently perpetuate harmful ideas about gender and sexuality that perpetuate rigid gender binaries, and strict gender roles and expressions. It is important to dismantle such misconceptions through the promotion of self-reflection, dialogue and understanding in society. I find myself as having a role in that work by delving into the intricacies of language, and the perspectives on gender and sexuality within our intellectual traditions. We should be able to have open and honest discussions about our cultural heritage to understand what our past has to say about the diversity of our experiences in this world.

Fifth Cluster

Let us return briefly to the disgust that Rigby expressed when speaking about the 'sodomites' from Muscat. A second, alternative reading of this can reveal a more profound insight:

I write this because I began to see and recognize the commonalities that unite these terms just like there are commonalities that unite us, both regionally and globally.

the *makhanith* from Muscat were living despite the homophobia and transphobia of people like Rigby. In fact, perhaps they were visiting *mahanisi* in Zanzibar. Today, when visiting places, we reach out to the people who we know to be there, we share time and place with them, and experience moments of a life worth sharing together. This insight should not be blocked away by the damaging sentiments that are often shared by cis-heterosexual people who struggle to understand and accept that there are life experiences very different from their own.

We should always be open to examining these difficult texts that give us an insight into our past. Doing that gives us a window into a complex but crucial understanding of our intellectual and cultural past. I believe it would help us in figuring out an inclusive and empathetic future for ourselves.

Sixth Cluster

When I began my research, I devoted considerable time and thought to the figure of the *khuntha*, without thinking beyond that word alone. It was only when I started wondering a bit more about the root of the word, *kha-nun-tha*, that I began to realise there was more. In the *kha-nun-tha* root, I saw a rich constellation of ideas, identities, people and their life stories, and their life practices. This constellation is what binds us all together. It is true that these words and expressions have been used against *mujtama' al-mim/'ayn*, but I prefer to look at what these words can show us about the people who were labelled this way. I found that there was a way to embrace shared experiences with these people in the past, despite the prejudice and bigotry of the people writing about them.

Instead of thinking about the conventional binary categories like normal/abnormal, and male/female, I found myself concerned more with *our* community – *our* history, *our* future, and how *our*

past can show us a path for the future. We should consider all the concepts that share a common linguistic root collectively, and alongside other terms that we use today. I write this because I began to see and recognise the commonalities that unite these terms just as there are commonalities that unite us, both regionally and globally. A perspective like this would not only help us challenge and dismantle rigid categories that keep us apart, but it can also foster a compassionate, interconnected understanding of our diverse range of experiences that can become the foundation of a powerful solidarity that sustains us.

My scholarly journey was for me a meditative one where I got to think a lot about how terms that have separated us can become terms of solidarity among a queer community. I got to wonder what it could look like. Just as LGBT grew with the + into LGBTQI+, I found the *kha-nun-tha* leading me to further and further terms in a way that led me to begin thinking of its component letters being not separated by a hyphen or a slash but rather united with a +: *Mujtama' al-mim/'ayn* and *kha+nun+tha*. There will always be more commonalities between us, and our past, and our future, than that which separates us; and that should be the foundation for a future for all of us where we can face prejudice, bigotry and stigma.

Are You a Pan-Arab Nationalist or Just a Man Who Sleeps With Men?

Adam HajYahia

On 14 June 1933, Haim Arlosoroff, head of the political department of the Jewish Agency, returned from Nazi Germany to Palestine. He had just finalised the details of what would become the Haavara Agreement (also known as the Transfer Agreement), which outlined a plan for the Nazi government to transfer 60,000 German Jews and $100 million in assets to Palestine, with the facilitation of the Jewish Agency and the British Mandate government. This was to be in exchange for the suspension of the international Jewish boycott of the Third Reich, led by many international Jewish organisations, many of which were based in the United States. Arlosoroff was assassinated two days after his return from Germany while walking by Tel Aviv's beach with his wife Sima. Two months later, the Jewish Agency and Nazi German representatives signed and began the implementation of the agreement.

News of Arlosoroff's death spread fast and disturbed both the Zionist movement and the British government. Arlosoroff's funeral was said to be the largest in the history of the Mandate, with an estimated assemblage of 100,000 colonial mourners. After several different investigations, British colonial officials indicted three men from the Zionist party Brit HaBirionim (The Alliance of Thugs), which publicly opposed Arlosoroff and the deal. One of the men was the party leader Abba Ahimeir, who was charged with incitement of violence. The prosecution began in January 1934 and charged the two others, Abraham Stavsky and Ze'evi Rosenblatt, with Arlosoroff's murder. Sima Arlosoroff testified against them, and all newspapers – Zionist, British and Palestinian – followed the trial in detail, printing transcripts of court proceedings in Hebrew, English and Arabic (respectively).

Arlosoroff's assassination generated vicious tensions within the Zionist movement that transcended the typical secular-religious dichotomy that historians of Zionism often deploy. It was in this context that Zionist labour parties in Palestine introduced more convenient Arab suspects. Word broke that two Palestinian men from the village of Manshiya (near Jaffa), Abdul Majid and Issa Darwish, were the real assassins of Arlosoroff. Some Zionist newspapers uncritically reported Abdul Majid's false confession given under duress. The British Supreme Court dropped the charges against Stavsky and Rosenblatt and began new trial proceedings against Majid and Darwish in February 1934.

The prosecution sought to establish both men as plausible suspects, not on the basis of incriminating evidence but on their

That specific formulation of discourse about Palestinian anti-colonial political activity and sexuality was part of a broader ongoing dynamic that would become intrinsic to Zionism's coercive logic, manifest through language.

cultural and political identifiers as *Palestinians* and the different meanings this political category was later burdened with. Their trial and testimonies operated at the level of language instead of evidence, and pivoted around their 'political opposition' to Zionist and British colonial powers, their affiliation with the grand mufti of Palestine, Muhammad Amin al-Husseini, and, more importantly for our purposes, their native deviant 'sexuality.' In the 8 February 1934 hearing, Horace Samuel, the British lawyer appointed to defend Ahimeir, Rosenblatt and Stavsky, asked the judge directly if he was aware of Abdul Majid's sexual relationship with Darwish. The judge responded that he was unaware of such information. The prosecutor then turned to Abdul Majid and declared, 'Issa claims that you two started having sexual relations three years ago.' Abdul Majid laughed and said, 'This could be true if it were you he's sleeping with!' The prosecutor and the judge laughed, and then the prosecutor proceeded to interrogate Abdul Majid about his knowledge of guns. Despite the lack of evidence presented, it was enough for politically charged language to be uttered in court to begin formulating public opinion against Abdul Majid and Issa Darwish.

Three months later, in May 1934, the prosecution dropped all charges against Abdul Majid and Issa Darwish. Stavsky and Rosenblatt regained their stardom as the two main suspects. We could speculate that Abdul Majid and Darwish were used only as a temporary distraction until the heat of the assassination cooled down. Alternatively, British authorities (and their Zionist allies) might have failed in their framing schemes, given the counterevidence presented by the defence.

Yet that specific formulation of discourse about Palestinian anti-colonial political activity and sexuality, emblematic in their

[illegible] approached in prison to make such a letter [illegible] January 1934.

10 [illegible]

11 Ibid.

12 Ibid.

13 Ibid.

14 Ibid.

15 *Filastin*, 8 May 1934.

case, was part of a broader ongoing dynamic that would become intrinsic to Zionism's coercive logic, manifest through language. A couple of years after the assassination, on 19 April 1936, the Great Arab Revolt erupted, disrupting the flow of commerce, challenging colonial settlement and collectivising anti-colonial class consciousness. It would last until 1939. Although initially regarded as sporadic, the revolt proved to be deadly, forceful, and of critical magnitude, causing havoc in the British-Zionist colonial matrix.

Zionist and British military personnel and political figures described Palestinian revolutionaries as criminals, rendering any opposition to the Mandate government and increasing Zionist settlement and land expropriation a crime, using the legal framework as a counter-revolutionary apparatus. The 1936 Code Ordinance, completed five months after the inception of the revolt – passing new laws and ossifying others – introduced the criminal framework that solidified the legal infrastructure to support this counter-revolutionary apparatus. This ordinance is of unprecedented historical significance within Palestine because it also contained an extensive legal interpretation of sexuality, sexual deviance, sexual morality and unnatural offences, putting forth the primary political framework that would criminalise Palestinians for their sexuality, sexual attitudes and desires that deviate from the colonial order.

It was through the definitions posed by the Ordinance that a newfound understanding of native sexuality began to take shape. 'Sexual Offences' became a vague criminal category whose form turned into a lexical dump within which all kinds of behaviours started to pile.

In his reflections on the Great Arab Revolt in general and on the Arlosoroff assassination case specifically, self-proclaimed 'fascist' and Zionist revisionist Abba Ahimeir described the native Palestinian population as a threat to Jewish civilisation and city life. He wrote:

In those years [the 1930s], the Arab 'Shabab' were part of Tel Aviv's city life, not only because the girls walked around without a veil, but because they also walked without company. Since forever, the Jewish city has attracted the masses for its lights and busy streets, regardless if it is night or day. Manshiya, on the other hand, is a murderers' nest, and what it offered appealed to the 'underworld,' including that of the Mufti. It is rather hard to make distinctions between the Manshiyan 'Shabaab' and

16 [illegible] *The* [illegible]

17 Ibid.

18 [illegible] describe Arab political activities, read: Kelly [illegible]

19 [illegible] *The English Historical Review*, 124 (507) [illegible]

20 [illegible]

21 [illegible]

distinguish between those who sleep with men and those who are Pan-Arab nationalists. Manshiya never bore any Oriental romance like other places. Although its residents were Muslims, they didn't have the traditions of Easterners; they were *Levantinians* in the worst sense of the word.[illegible]

Ahimeir was a prolific writer and owner of several newspapers. His colonial rhetoric in the above quote is in harmony with the rest of his writings.[illegible] Yet, a striking feature of such rhetoric is the ease with which desire and sexuality are sublimated with Palestinian nativity to the land and anti-colonial political dissent. Young Palestinian men are said to have gone to Tel Aviv for the unveiled Jewish women but are also supposedly known to have slept with men. Their Arab nationalist political activity and alleged 'hatred of Jews' not only cannot be separated from their 'Levantinian' habit of sleeping with each other but also obscures the associated behaviours of being Pan-Arabists, or worse, their deviant sexuality is intrinsic to their nationalism.[illegible] Despite his instrumentalisation of Palestinian men's 'deviant' sexuality as a signifier of degeneration intrinsic to their nativity, Ahimeir is unable to reconcile simultaneous expressions of Arab nationalism, anti-colonialism and male same-sex desire.

Through this seemingly exceptional and explicit example of political tumult, it becomes evident that Palestinian sexuality was an object which the British and the Zionists attempted to organise and instrumentalise for the advancements of their too often concurrent colonial interests. But of greater importance is what underlies such colonial advancements and rhetoric, materially and psychically, and the sheer unfolding reality that these examples aren't haphazard or scattered after all but salient, particularly at the level of discourse.

Over the past thirty years, feminist and queer perspectives and struggles within the broader Palestinian liberation movement have formulated a discursive analysis of how the Zionist colonial regime uses the liberal homonationalist rationale of LGBT rights to justify its colonisation of Palestine. The analysis observes that this tactic functions through the dehumanisation of Palestinians via their negated conceptualisation as a degenerate Other to colonial subjectivity. Under this negation, this strategy essentialises Palestinians to a predetermined idea of savagery that confines our colonised subjectivity within signifiers of innate antagonism towards queerness and femininity. Patriarchy and conservatism towards gender and sexual diversity, in this

[illegible] The [illegible] collection of texts [illegible] quotation marks in an [illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible] hatred of [illegible]

paradigm, become culturalised as structures and phenomena that exclusively prevail in colonised societies, whereas the Zionist project and its counterpart European gentile society are, of course, standardised as the civilised, cultured, gay-loving and women-emancipating forces of the world.

The term 'pinkwashing' has been commonly used to describe this branch of colonial and imperialist propaganda in the context of Palestine – but also elsewhere – where the alleged 'gay-loving' nature of Israel's settler society overcompensates for their annihilatory, military and colonial violence against Palestinians in their native homeland. Such practices are operational by relying on the liberal marketability to which the LGBT rights framework has fallen and its regard as higher and more distinct value over the safety, sovereignty, and freedom of native Palestinians, who are abstracted to a sheerly patriarchal and violent society. Such tactics are not to be confused with simple linguistic gestures or bad journalism; they must be considered ideological colonial interventions. They are sustained by ongoing Israeli lobbying, funding and governmental schemes seeking to advance settlement and land expropriation at the expense of Palestinian material, psychic and intellectual life, yet all operate at the level of discourse and language.

But pinkwashing as an analytic framework does not suffice in encompassing the gravity of these colonial mechanisms and what is, in fact, at stake – primarily because pinkwashing is temporally anchored in contemporary manifestations of how sexual politics in Palestine are entangled with Zionism. Pinkwashing is a contemporary critical framework of a contemporary articulation of sexual politics, and it is exclusively associated with the specificity of LGBT rights as a liberalised globalised framework of sexual emancipation. What it fails to account for is the historical development and ongoing mutation of the colonial sexual apparatus in Palestine that renders Palestinian sexuality both a colonial weapon and a threat to the settler-colonial project at once. This apparatus has been primarily infiltrating the colonised society through language, assigning antagonising meanings to different words and concepts that change the very nature of their logic and means of circulation.

As Arlosoroff's case demonstrates, the othering of Palestinians in the early twentieth century was formulated on the basis of their conception as sexually and culturally degenerate, not for their antagonism towards same-sex relations and other non-normative

The foundation of the Zionist settler project in Palestine necessitated establishing markers of difference between the coloniser and colonised through negating various cultural attributions.

sexual practices, but the complete opposite. The foundation of the Zionist settler project in Palestine necessitated establishing markers of difference between the coloniser and colonised through negating various cultural attributions. That project sustains and legitimises its existence and support by Western imperial powers by aligning itself with what is contemporaneously perceived as righteous within the Western order of things.

For example, when Su'ad Abdul Rahim Al-Masri ran away from her fiancé Hilmi Mohammad Al-Jartali with a woman named Naifeh Hamza in 1946 Haifa, they were referred to as sex workers by the British colonial office and Zionist officers who dealt with their case of disappearance.[25] Although there was no evidence whatsoever that the two women engaged in commercial sex, their suspected same-sex affair was constantly referred to through the notion of prostitution to encourage a negative Palestinian public opinion about them through their conceptualisation as sexually-degenerate, not necessarily their plausible homosexuality.[26]

Today, these colonial politics persist, but they are changing their shell, presenting a performative nationalist phantom of sexual politics. Colonies and imperial nation-states in the Western world market the commodified bodies of queers while, not so long ago, within the timeframe of Arlosoroff's assassination, the marketability used in establishing nationalist and colonial projects was based on the exclusion of then-queered bodies. In Arlosoroff's assassination case, Palestinian non-normative 'deviant' sexuality, and more specifically male same-sex, was the native danger that threatened the Zionist settler movement and its masculinist nationalist aspirations. Nowadays, non-normative 'deviant' sexuality and homosexuality are framed as essentially foreign to Palestinian society, often labelled as a Western

25 [illegible] tary.Judicial-000nu [illegible]

26 Ibid.

product. The evermore agonising crisis in such a conundrum is that this logic is not exclusively reproduced by Zionists and Israel's allies but also by colonised societies that have been the historical subjects of sexual colonial violence. Entrapped in the colonial matrix, colonised societies globally have internalised these notions and believed such lies.

The inner workings of Zionist settler colonisation in Palestine ha blatantly succeeded in demolishing homes and building militaris and surveillance-serving separation walls. But they also manage to push for societal and psychic frontiers and borderlands that fracture our efforts for liberation. Suppose Palestine's Shabaab were indeed dangerous to Zionist militias and British colonists without the ability to distinguish between those who are 'Pan-Arab' nationalists and the others who sleep with men. How did these same men suddenly become the Western informants ruining our anti-colonial movement for liberation? And why did w so easily give up the multitudes innate to being Palestinian to be exclusively understood as Western-imported inventions, divorcin them from their supposedly Eastern roots? I am not making a case for returning to a fantastical and imagined pre-colonial time that is allegedly non-violent, as that past imagination is inherentl manufactured by a colonial present. Instead, we shall reconsider the trickeries of language, conceptions and words and their capabilities to shatter and build entire worlds and maybe conside abandoning them for forms of living that refuse to be defined or captured by colonial regimes of legibility altogether.

Terteeb, Bahdaleh, Tha'afeh and Crisscrossing Transness

Nisrine Chaer

Despite hosting the highest proportion of refugees per capita in the world, Lebanon refuses to recognise the designation of UNHCR[1] refugee status, and imposes restrictive residency perr guidelines and security policies that pose significant obstacles to the lives of trans refugees. Most of them lack legal residenc status, congruent gender marker, and access to resources, thu living simultaneously as 'refugee deviants', 'trans deviants' and 'working-class deviants'.

In addition, trans refugees must prove persecution based on their gender identity and articulate their trans identities using terminology and discourses dictated by institutional humanitari and activist apparatuses, all towards accessing humanitarian protection by the UNHCR, local NGO resources, and the possibility of resettlement in the West. However, such terms ma not necessarily capture or register with how these trans refugee make sense of themselves and their experiences.

In the following essay, I turn to the story of two trans refugees – Jamila and Amir – to account for how transness exceeds the contours of prevailing gender and sexuality, and how respectabili operates and is deployed by trans refugees, both in the public space and the humanitarian space. The stories herein take place in a context of a heightened gendered and classed violence unleashed by the Lebanese state and its moral panics. They also exist amid ever-rising regulation and securitisation of 'terrorist' migrants in Lebanon and the consolidation of the humanitarian-activist institutions.

Against this backdrop, I look to how *terteeb* (respectability), *bahdaleh* (vulgarity/humiliation), and *tha'afeh* (education/civility), are mobilised by and against trans refugees as they crisscross the borders of concealment/exposure, the classed markers of Lebanese femininity/masculinity, and humanitarian nomenclature for LGBTI identities. Attending ethnographically to how notions of *terteeb*, *bahdaleh* and *tha'afeh* buttress working-class trans refugee deviances, this piece explores how trans refugees navigate and deploy creative strategies to circumvent citizenship-based, gendered, classed forms of violence imposed by the security-morality apparatus, as well as by the humanitarian-NGO system in Lebanon, which normalises a limited understanding of what trans refugee experiences could look like. The essential intervention is that the lived experience of trans refugees directly shows the limitations of Eurocentric/Western and class/citizenship-devoid frameworks of sex and gender.[2]

1 United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees.

2 [illegible] and subsumes all [illegible] the deployment of [illegible] themselves

Mama Jamila

'I'm not very familiar with these terms,' Jamila confessed when I inquired about the terminology she uses to self-identify. With a hint of sarcasm in her tone, she went on to explain, 'The last time I attempted to research them on Google, I ended up with a headache and ran out of internet credit. I was hoping to educate, civilise myself and gain a better understanding of LGBTI terms.'

Jamila told me, 'I first became aware of the term "trans" through Helem. I myself identify as a *mara* [a woman]. During my initial UN interview, I told the employee that I am a *mara*. He asked me to clarify: "What do you mean, *mara*?" I replied, "Look at me, what do you see?" I was dressed in a black jacket and did not wear makeup or a wig, presenting as a *rijjeil straight* [straight man]. The employee looked at me and said, "I see a *shab* [a man]." I said: "Because you have squint eyes. I am a *mara*." He said: "Do you mean trans?" I said: "I don't know, I didn't learn language, what is 'trans'?" He started explaining to me. And later on, in Helem, I learned about what trans is, *tsa'afet* [I got educated/civilised], although throughout my life I saw myself as a *mara*.'

Jamila, a trans woman in her late forties from Syria, has been residing in Lebanon since the nineties. She has worked as a tailor since her childhood. When she ventures outside, she butches up and presents herself in male attire, only donning feminine clothing in the privacy of her home and neighbourhood. Jamila is content with her physical appearance and has no interest in undergoing medical transition, stating, '*Ana met'ableh jesmeh* [I accept my body]. When I get resettled in the future, I will do laser, and that's sufficient.'

Mama Jamila's sarcastic and witty comment 'I ran out of internet credit' in response to the expectation of 'educating/civilising' herself ('*tsa'afet*') about LGBTI terms (and specifically transness) throws shade at NGO discourses on LGBTI terminology. It unapologetically embraces a class position marked by poverty, in the face of humanitarian institutions' attempt to educate and civilise it, which I will elaborate on in this section. Additionally, Mama Jamila's refusal to undergo medical transition, and her subversion of dominant systems of kinship through trans motherhood, capture the complex dynamics and sites of resistance that trans refugees inhabit when navigating the humanitarian space. Her narrative depicts how the experiences, views and aspirations of trans refugees are incommensurate with the system of identifications held by the humanitarian and asylum-granting institutions.

[illegible]

[illegible] *Bee Tee 'am hawil* [illegible]

A local LGBTI organisation.

[illegible] Arabic.

The term pronounced in English.

I am not at all making the argument that transsexuality is less politically subversive.

Her narrative depicts how the experiences, views and aspirations of trans refugees are incommensurate with the system of identifications held by the humanitarian and asylum-granting institutions.

What does Mama Jamila exactly mean by '*tsa'afet*' [I got educated/civilised]? What does this story tell us about the state of transness in the humanitarian space and the reality of needing to crisscross it?

LGBTI identity categories occupy a particular place in the asylum system. Following the Syrian uprising, which turned into war and displacement, Lebanon has witnessed the emergence of several local NGOs with projects that focus on LGBTI refugees. Adriana Qubaiová, a scholar of gender and sexuality in the Middle East, explains that these local NGOs not only served the role of context providers to international NGOs but also produced the figure of the LGBTI refugee through narratives of victimhood and through specific global terminology of LGBTI identities. Receiving 'education/civilisation' from NGOs (as the term *tsa'afet* indicates) and UNHCR's advice on the correct usage of LGBTI identity categories, Mama Jamila is thus the trans refugee subject who is being introduced to the globalised terminology of transness. She thereby enters a new politics of identification, and codes of civility and respectability that would grant her access to models of political legitimacy.

One way to interpret these respectable educational/civilising endeavours that push trans refugees to adopt a globalised terminology and experience of transness, is by looking at how the term 'transgender' recently emerged as an identity category within the context of asylum. Researcher and activist Fadi Saleh argues that trans refugees 'encounter *transgender* first and foremost as a humanitarian term, rather than a social, cultural, medical, or political one, whose implications, politics, meanings, and effects rest primarily on its ability to enable mobility, govern and regulate non-normative genders and sexualities, and interpellate gender-variant and queer populations into being as intelligible transgender refugees for the asylum-granting institutions and countries'.

[illegible] Qubaiová [illegible] 2019 [illegible] Beirut [illegible] University.

Ibid.

[illegible] Saleh [illegible] Humanitarian [illegible] Turkey [illegible] 2020 [illegible] (pp [illegible]

Saleh explains that trans refugee applicants who seek humanitarian protection through the UNHCR must demonstrate a genuine fear of persecution based on their gender identity. Importantly, they are required to understand and manoeuvre the meanings of *transgender* as the only identity category through which their histories of gendered persecution can be narrated, and as the primary signifier of their manifold expressions and experiences of gender within the UNHCR's humanitarian space. Other than globalising and hegemonising 'trans', what these LGBTI categories install is the separation between gender and sexuality, a separation that is a recent phenomenon. In such a humanitarian setting, refugees are expected not only to use Western identity terms in their asylum claims, but also to identify with the term 'trans' based on the separation of their gender from their sexuality. Concerning the latter, it is important to mention that, for many transfeminine refugees, 'it is their sexual attraction toward men that constitutes a decisive factor in their identification and self-understanding as *shimelat*'. Other than *shimelat*, I met many transfeminine refugees who identify as *ounsa* (female), *mara* (woman), *bint* or *bint tabi'i* (girl or normal girl), *ladyboy*, *tant*, *gay nei'meh* (soft gay), *'endi mouyoul* (having orientations), or *'imra'a fi jasad rajol* (woman in the body of a man) – all of which are categories that are not only very much embedded within the societies in which they emerged, but also are categories that conflate gender identification with sexual desire towards men.

Relatedly, terms used to describe passing as a cisgender person, like *bint tabi'i* (normal girl) or *rijjeil straight* (straight man) featured in Jamila's quote above, indicate a schism from the hegemonic term cisgender. While *rijjeil straight* conflates gender and sexuality, *bint tabi'i* does not shy away from producing a so-called cisgender subject at the site of normality. Furthermore, *'endi mouyoul* (having orientations), articulates a transness that is not only bound to a multitude of sexual orientations (emphasised using the plural), but one that also resists identification and is rather defined by an acquisition of orientations through the repetition of some actions over others.

These categories, orientations and modes of identifications that many trans refugees employ to self-identify are not acknowledged within the asylum system. That is why many queer and trans refugees in Lebanon invest in performing and presenting exclusively as one of the LGBTI categories. Yet these forms of transness, as described in this section, trouble and run

counter or diagonal to the hegemonic, respectable and civilised version of transness. Jamila's usage of the term conjoined with her shady tone and her sharp ambivalence towards such transness indicate that, in their encounter with transgender as a humanitarian term, trans refugees employ and reproduce but simultaneously evade and jam the term.

Amir

Amir is a trans man from Palestine/Jordan who lived in Beirut and was homeless for some time. 'If you look *helo* and *mrattab* [well-groomed, composed and respectable] they [the UN] won't give you resettlement you won't step out of here. Being *mrattabin* and *mabsoutin* [respectable and happy] that's for when we go out... When you look *mrattab* [decent/respectable], rarely any security forces would intercept you... If you look *mbahdal* [dishevelled and vulgar/disrespectable] and exhausted, they will know that you're homeless and that no one will check on you, that's when they arrest you.'

Today in Lebanon, and since 2015, we are witnessing an amplification of the security crackdown against Syrian refugees. For instance, the announcement from Lebanon's Ministry of Interior on 2 May 2023 resulted in a raft of new restrictions on refugees and a crackdown on the 1.8 million Syrians currently residing in Lebanon. Lebanon's security forces have installed checkpoints and conducted raids to sweep up Syrian refugees who lack legal residency papers. This security campaign is fuelled by the TV stations, politicians and the general public under the guise of a moral panic and is coupled with racist, nationalist discourses that frame refugees as the culprit of Lebanon's economic collapse.

The plight of both trans and non-trans refugees in Lebanon is exacerbated by their lack of formal residency papers and subsequent limited access to resources. For working-class and undocumented trans refugees, the challenges are sometimes more daunting, as they face additional risks of arrest due to the gender incongruence between their ID photos/names and current appearance.

Alongside experiences of lack of safety and risks of arrest, trans refugees experience a particular dissonance between the public space and the humanitarian space, which Amir discerns above. Amir exposes a paradox inherent within the asylum system: accessing the resources necessary for survival depends on the

Trans refugees bear the markers of particular class, citizenship and language that position them outside both the social and the humanitarian spaces.

exposition of one's vulnerabilities, while the system also openly acknowledges that trans people must disguise themselves on the streets and conceal their transness for safety and in order to circumvent possible exposure as gender deviants. Amir's story goes further. The concealment of a visible transness in public space is not only imbued with gendered markers, but also classed as one (*bahdaleh*, *terteeb*). On the street, trans refugees must present in a body that can be read as *mrattab* and non-*mbahdal*, not only as non-trans.

For Amir, projecting a sense of dignity and respectability is necessary for his safety while being on the streets of Beirut. He highlights the paradoxical situation that many trans refugees face where they are compelled to strike a delicate balance. On one hand, in public they must dress in a *mrattab* [respectable] manner – passing as middle-class and Lebanese – to shield themselves from arbitrary arrests and scrutiny by state security officers. On the other hand, they must adopt a *mbahdal* [disrespectable] attire while visiting the UNHCR office and perform a certain persona – the suffering trans refugee – to elicit sympathy and support from its representatives and have a chance at applying for resettlement. This performance of vulnerability is also expected by LGBTI refugees in the spaces of local and international NGOs, whereby accessing services is dependent on one's capacity to demonstrate that they really need services.

Mrattab/non-*mbahdal* is a performance and an embodiment of a middle-class status and references one's respectability and prestige. In Amir's case, the classed practice of *mrattab*-passing is also citizenship-bound, as in the example discussed in the last quote; it is anchored in the trans body, reshuffling the construction of transness to capture the class-based and citizenship related aspects of the gendered/sexualized trans body. Passing as *mrattab* helps in bringing safety, away from street scrutiny, and the risk of arrest.

Conclusion

Trans refugees bear the markers of particular class, citizenship and language that position them outside both the social and th humanitarian spaces. Given that transness is solidly inflected by citizenship and class, concealing their working-class position simultaneously conceals their non-Lebanese-ness and their transness. To be *mrattab* on the streets and *mbahdal* in the humanitarian-activist space, and willing to undergo a process of *ta'afeh* (education/civility), reveals a crisscrossing of transness wherein trans refugees are crafting themselves to gain safety and legitimacy. In doing so, they repurpose transness based on a new sense of public morality, informed by simultaneously classed gendered/sexualised and citizenship-related markers, and based on humanitarian aid-produced narratives of suffering and hegemonic transness.

Instead of subsuming class and citizenship under gender/sexuality, this essay has thus highlighted two modalities of transness: first, how transness is mediated by respectability and civility in the humanitarian space, and second, how transness is experienced and lived beyond the singular axis of gender/sexuality through *mrattabeh*-sensibility performance. While trans refugees publicly fashion themselves in socially respectable ways befitting to a Lebanese middle-class milieu, such aesthetics do not entail class-infused aspirations that revolve around acquiring social acceptability. *Mrattabeh*-passing is tactic of resistance predicated on the material conditions under which trans refugees live.

A Pedagogy of Rumours

Sophie Chamas

'It is known.' I grew up hearing that about a variety of people, places and things from relatives, friends and strangers. So much of what is taken as common sense or quotidian knowledge in the Middle East and North Africa has its roots in rumours and whispers that traverse space and time. Perhaps it is inaccurate, then, to refer to this as roots, because the beginnings of rumours and the whispery paths they traverse are hard to trace, locate and map.

Knowing with certainty without knowing the origins, location and justification of that knowledge is certainly not unique to the MENA region. That is, after all, why so many scholars have worked to de-naturalise what we take as common sense, to link it to power and to the entanglement of knowledge with power – to understand and articulate the body as a canvas onto which discourse has been carved over and over again until it sinks into the subcutaneous. Knowledge is never neutral: the traditional spaces and mechanisms in and through which we learn and produce knowledge are governed by regulations that work to align it with norms and ideas that serve the status quo. It then comes to be perceived as always having been there, as always having been known and merely discovered and unearthed, rather than invented.

If we accept that so much of what is known and, therefore, what is said, about queer people in the MENA region is a product of rumour and whisper, of speculation in the service of power and the normative, does that alter how we go about re-narrating the past, present and future of queerness in the region?

Furthermore, is not the sharing of knowledge through gossip and rumour about queerness and those suspected of being queer itself a queer form of historicization and of knowledge production about what it means to be queer and who is queer? I have always been struck by the pedagogical and informational dimensions of social settings like the *ṣobḥiyyé*, or morning gathering, in the MENA region, which serve primarily as a means for women to share and impart knowledge about people and modes of inappropriate and appropriate living. Rarely are any of the reflections shared in such spaces rooted in evidence, be they prescriptive or revelatory, but they are always delivered or performed with authority. Is there something queer about this refusal to abide by the conventional norms of excavating history, investigating the present and proscribing for the future? In this case it is often a queer method in service of the status quo, but what if we abandoned its normative purpose and held on to the non-normative means?

> This glossary, largely documents the language through which queer Arabs are linguistically fashioned and re-fashioned into deviants by society at large.

Should queers prove that they have always been here – 'here' in this case being the MENA? What might it do, or what might it mean, to abandon normative methodologies and evidence and embrace the very means through which queerphobic knowledge has been produced and sedimented? To not so much locate the queer MENA subjects across time and space but imagine them? To map not so much the trace of concrete being but to carve out new paths for becoming? What if we began to not only whisper counter-hegemonic rumours but to take into our mouths those toxic, poisonous words and terms that have left a bad taste for queerness? And spit them back out as something else, something that for many might still be perceived or experienced as off-putting, as nauseating, as foreign and therefore dangerous? But for those whose tongues yearn to touch something that can taste like home amid alienation and coldness made ordinary, will be something that can feel like a coating and exhilarating warmth, like belonging, like home?

Can homes, can belonging, be built not merely atop the consequences of violence but from that violence itself? What would it mean to anchor the self in that which threatens to alienate and/or to kill? What if slurs, rather than being experienced as a means through which to push one away, to drive one underground, to expel, were refashioned into a homecoming, into a means of ushering one into belonging and community?

I was struck by the preponderance of slurs in this queer Arab glossary. One might assume, when being handed a glossary of queer Arab terminology, that most of that compendium would comprise the ways through which queer Arabs articulate their identities or practices, relate to one another, classify one another, and engage in coded ways of identifying one another. This glossary, however, largely documents the language through which queer Arabs are linguistically fashioned and refashioned into deviants by society at large. I found myself ruminating on the political implications of folding this terminology into this glossary – of making it into not merely a part but a foundational element of a queer Arab lexicon.

'Bend over, you are in Idlib,' the glossary tells us, pointing to the rumoured preponderance of gay men in the Syrian city. There is no investment in challenging the idea that certain Arab locales are hubs for queer relationality, despite the emasculating, demonising and even dehumanising purpose that such claims are meant to serve. So what if Idlib is queer as fuck? That seems to be the implicit response to this rumour. Coupled with a plethora of cross-regional modes of classifying and identifying queers, the glossary also appears to point to a region that, via its own lexigraphy, implies a sort of queer infestation. Aren't all of your cities and towns queer? If not, why do you need so many terms? If not, why are you always on the lookout?

Rather than challenge deviance as a framework, the glossary seems to destabilise the region's own understanding of what its most normative and most dominant sexual and gendered practices are. Yes, the glossary seems to say, we are deviants, but aren't we all? If bottoming is deviance, if gender play is deviance, if effeminacy is deviance, if promiscuity is deviance...? And if all of these things are also joy, are also pleasure, are also exhilaration, which is at the root of their being framed as immoral, as sinful, as evil...? If their being labelled deviance is an injunction to control oneself, to deprive oneself...? Then more power to the deviant – and may we all learn from them how to live more fully and in service of the body and the politics of its pleasurable potentialities

Yes, I am a deviant. Why are you so obsessed with me? You claim deviance leaves a bad taste in your mouth, but you can't stop sucking on it, twisting your tongue around it, swallowing it, gagging, spitting it back out, slurping it back up again, foaming at the mouth with it. Are you sure you don't like the taste?

The glossary with its transtemporal and cross-spatial approach to a regional lexicon of queerness, seems to say not so much that queers have always been here as that deviance has – and to reframe deviance into a politics of bodily pleasure and subterranean communal belonging. What might we become when we embrace our otherness and invite others into it? That is, rather than attempting to normalise ourselves, and to fold ourselves into a norm rooted in self- and communal-deprivation and policing, one only ever meant to serve those whose power depends on the distracting potential of moral and sex panics?

Queer Arabness is, we are shown, always in the process of being made and unmade, endlessly being built through an amalgamation of ways of seeing and knowing across time and space.

What happens when we lean into the panic, when we invite others to hyperventilate as they watch deviance run rampant? They may see the pleasure in that crossing of boundaries, in the body opening up to itself and others, and harness that pleasure as a means of seeing past and through the discursive undergirding of power. What's so threatening about a bottom? What's so threatening about a tomboy? If we sit with the terms through which queers are demonised – the very discursive means through which they are constructed as other, as danger, as contaminant – and swallow not only the benign nature of the acts through which these constructions are articulated but their titillating potential, what becomes of the queer and the harm we assume they threaten? What happens to our understanding of what and who these frameworks serve, and how our lives have been lived not in service of the good and just and holy, but of political and economic corruption masquerading as moral guardian?

There is, moreover, no desire to curate an indigenous queer Arab lexicon via this glossary. Terms that point to a pre-modern and pre-colonial history of non-normative and fluid gender and sexuality sit alongside Arabised versions of Western terms. Queerness, here, is presented as invention, as becoming rather than being. Queer Arabness is, we are shown, always in the process of being made and unmade, endlessly being built through an amalgamation of ways of seeing and knowing across time and space. There is no one way to be queer, to be Arab, and therefore to be and to speak queer Arabness. Its beauty is in its inauthenticity, in its destabilising potential, in its simultaneous rootedness and un-rootedness. It refuses to be unmoored from the region, but it also refuses the boundaries of that region as curators of identity and becoming. It borrows and plays, fashions and refashions, undermines and subverts. It is an invitation to question, to imagine, to become other and more than what we have been told we can be.

More than anything, however, this is a glossary by and for queer Arabs. It is a reminder that queer Arabs have always and will always find and cultivate home among one another – that in their collectivity and via the joy that can be derived from coded language they can refuse as oxymoronic their framing by both Western queers and Arab heterosexuals. It is a reminder of the political importance of creating discursive means through which queer Arabs can not only articulate themselves but see themselves in others. These others share their identitarian struggles and are creatively finding ways to refuse their alienation both at home and abroad. Such a framework would allow queer Arabs to refuse the injunction to be either queer or Arab, and to accept the invitation to unmake and remake both of these orientations. It is a reminder that archives need not be authorised, need not be evidence-based, and that they can be felt, be swallowed, be spat back out, and that language and people can be a home when place is unwelcoming.

A Dance of Gossip

Translated from Arabic by Ziad Dallal

Rana Issa

The Lebanese artist Renée Deek invited her girlfriends to a morning gossip session. She asked each of the girls to bring along an item of food. As for Renée, she would prepare coffee and mimosas. The invitation was limited to a trusted number of ladies whom Renée had not seen for a long time. Those certain to come were the Fariyaqiyyah, who was introduced to Renée by her husband, Ahmad Faris al-Shidyaq. Fariyaqiyyah had dazzled Renée with her beauty and subtle wit. Also in attendance was the diva Bassem Feghali, who, like the host, defies gender binaries and whom Renée adores. And it just so happened that the Iraqi singer Masoud al-Amartli was visiting Beirut to perform a concert in Metro al-Madina. Masoud and Renée enjoyed a years-long love affair that settled down into an intimate friendship after Masoud married his second woman. The last of the invitees was Basra, that stunning odalisque who is sometimes forced to fuck the caliph, Harun al-Rashid. As for me, Raw'a, I am a servant in Renée's house, eavesdropping on the conversations between my mistress and her friends, and often recording these discussions in a little book so that I remember the meat and marrow of what I've heard.

1 [illegible] Lebanese actress, [illegible] wife, or rather, the [illegible] present), a Lebanese [illegible] maqams, a [illegible] characters.

Renée: Oh, Allah, ease Basra's predicament and help her get permission from the *gouīna* to leave.

Bassem: What's this '*gouīna*'?

Renée: A *madame* from a country brothel, she runs the affairs of the women's prison, and organises al-Rashid's 'orgy symposium,' which he holds for his visitors and friends.

Fariyaqiyyah: My husband always recounts the scandals of al-Rashid's court, and his lascivious indulgences at the expense of organising the affairs of the country. I tell him that the people of the country have come to hate everything that reminds them of corrupt rule. And so, they've come to hate debauchery and harlotry because they're convinced that, if Harun al-Rashid fucked less, he'd pay more attention to political matters. The public equates pleasuring the body with their daily destitution. They do not see that al-Rashid's corrupt rule is not due to promiscuity, but to the exploitation and enslavement of the people. He enslaves servant women in his lewd gatherings, he enslaves peasants, he treats the negroes of East Africa with contempt and—

Bassem: No no! I meant, what does the word *gouīna* mean? Is this her name or her title?

Fariyaqiyyah: I think the word is close to *ghāniya*, meaning a women who is so richly beautiful, she doesn't need makeup.

[There's a knock on the door, and Basra enters.]

Renée: Mention the pussy and you'll hear the purr. *Salut*, Basra. It's been a while, *ma chérie*.

Basra: *Habibti*, Renée, thank you for this invite! Hello ladies!

Fariyaqiyyah: *Bonjour*, Basra, it's nice to meet you. I am Mary, but the ladies call me Fariyaqiyyah.

Masoud: What's up *bazzouna*! It's been a while! We haven't seen each other since I died at the hands of my brother.

Bassem: These earrings are gorgeous! They're so drag! If I can have them...

Renée: Leave her in peace, Bassem! Come here, sit beside me and share with us the latest from the court. [She turns to me.] Raw'a, bring a mimosa for lady Basra *s'il te plait*, bless your hands.

Bassem: Before that, tell us, why do you call the madam of the brothel a *gouīna*?

Basra: Honey, I don't know. I think the word comes from the French *gouine*, meaning lesbian, but they do not use this term in the court. Only I and the other whores call her that, since she always sides with men and takes advantage of our weak position to boss us around. Like, to get permission to leave today I had to spend the entire night in her lair sucking on her clit – and she knew how tired I was already from the previous night, when I had to work and fuck three men and two whores for several hours, so that I barely slept.

Bassem (flirtatiously): Oh, poor you, you must despise sucking the *zakzakan*! Haha!

Basra: You're so thick-witted! Did you not hear me say I was very tired, and my pussy needed a rest and not more stimulation?

Fariyaqiyyah: I like the word *zakzakan*. Better than clitoris. The only sentence in which I prefer the word 'clit' is when Abu Bakr defends the messenger of God during the treaty of Hudaybiyyah by declaring: 'I've bitten the clit of al-Lat, are we to let him down?'

Masoud: What's this eloquent pledge, where did you read it?

Fariyaqiyyah: In al-Jahiz's book, *Braggart of Bondwomen and Lads*.

Masoud: I did not know you're so well-travelled in the world of Arabic Literature.

Fariyaqiyyah: Actually, I don't know how to read. My husband reads to me, and I memorise whatever I hear.

Masoud: He didn't teach you to how to distinguish letters?

Fariyaqiyyah: No! Ahmad says that if I know how to read then I will learn too much and no longer be satisfied with him in bed. He's afraid I'll read all that the Arabs have written about sex, even though he knows that, when the cat's away, the mice will play.

Masoud: You know, I, who was a woman, used to hate that I don't read and write. I did not learn how to tell letters apart until after I transitioned. Then, I was able to defy everyone's expectations of how a slave-girl ought to act. As soon as I got a bit of fame and money, I hired an Arabic language teacher to help me learn, after which I began writing songs by myself, and this is how I became the first Arab trans-person to write lyrics and compose music. My songs are the most beautiful in Iraqi music, especially considering that I was the first woman to sing about love between women in the history of Arabic music! And I even wrote in the vernacular of rural village girls and kept away from the dialect of aristocratic women. That's how I stood apart from Salima Murad and other ladies of Iraqi song.

Basra: You're a woman?

Masoud: Only in a manner of speaking, my dear. Though I'm manlier than the longest moustache and have the biggest dick.

[The women explode into laughter.]

Renée: Correct! *La littérature arabe* is severely lacking in women's writing about *le désir des femmes*, especially when what distinguishes the Arabs from many other civilisations is their steadfastness in writing about sex – so much so that it became a distinct literary style. We barely find anything related to the pleasures of women, despite Arab authors flooding their

books with details about a woman's body. Their writings do not reach the point of liberating the desire of women from man's authority, particularly when only men handled such topics. The question of pleasure is posed differently when writing about gays and *tantes*,[1] for example, where books are inundated with the question of love between men. As for lesbians, no one writes about them except the likes of al-Tifashi, al-Suyuti and al-Qazwini, and only sparingly do we find some segments in al-Jahiz, especially in the *Epistle on Singing Girls*, and the other book you mentioned earlier. I once tried to convince *mon cher ami*, the playwright Izz al-Din al-Madani, to write a script inspired by a story I read in al-Tifashi's *The Delight of Hearts*. I dreamed of playing the role of the *madame* in it, but I think he was abashed by the subject matter, and never approached it. *Billah* Mary, if you'd follow Masoud and learn how to read and write, then you can break man's sway over writing about women and their bodies. It is you who knows the history of Arabic literature, and not I!

1. [illegible] elderly and [illegible]

Fariyaqiyyah: *Sheikha*, I'm truly tired. Woe is me, as I strive to master English and Maltese and French and Turkish and Italian in this life of travelling forced on me and my husband. Let the coming generation of women pick up that task.

Bassem: Renée, *billah*, tell us more about *tanfushi*'s story, I want to be titillated listening to the spicy stories of the ancients.

Renée: Hah! Before I do that, let Masoud tell you how he transitioned to a man. Then I'll tell the story.

Masoud: *Akh!* Hahahaha, I was so young back then, barely eighteen years old. I was shepherding when two young men startled me and tried to rape me. I hit them and tied them up with rope and led them to the village sheikh where they were punished, and I became known in this world as a sister of men. That day, I decided to finally transition to manhood, for I have always felt that I do not belong in the category of women.

Renée: You're so strong, Masoud. Honestly, your story deserves to be a film, especially the parts about your marriage to women according to God's word and plan – and the tale of your murder at the hands of your brother because you transgressed all the social taboos is terrible in its brutality. But let's not talk about old wounds... OK, I'll tell you a story like Masoud's, but out of the history books. Al-Tifashi tells us that there was a *sheikha*

called Saqr, The Hawk, because she was ingenious in the art of seduction and prosperous in attracting the *bouyat*[1] and the girly girls to her bed, especially when her husband was travelling. One day, when she was visiting the baths, she met a girl whose beauty caused her heart to swell and who could command the moon to let her take its place. But her husband was home, and she couldn't take the girl back home with her, so she told her, 'Come, I know a *cimetière*' – what's that in Arabic?

1. [illegible]

Fariyaqiyyah: A graveyard, my dear.

Renée: Right, a graveyard rarely visited by anyone. She took her there and leaned her back on a high grave and took off her panties and buried her entire face in between her thighs. These two lesbians were reaching the heights of pleasure and did not notice that a sheikh on his donkey had entered the graveyard to visit his father's grave. The sheikh was alerted by the strange sounds coming from a faraway corner in the graveyard, so he moved towards the noise and found the two women as they were. He yelled, telling them to be ashamed, and screamed at the top of his voice for other people to come and witness this debauchery. At this point, the sheikha got up and told him, 'Why do you scream like this? Come and watch, I am sure you've never seen a cunt this tender. If you'd like, I'll let you put your prick in it, on condition that you keep our secret.' The sheikh was titillated and tantalised by this suggestion and, stuttering, said, 'But my donkey is here and there's no place to tie it.' The sheikha replied, 'Don't get flustered, I'll hold your donkey for you.' The sheikh hurried, unbuckled his belt, loosened his pants, took out his cock, and in front of him the girl spread her legs so that he can stick it in her. As soon his glans had perched on her gates of milk and honey, the sheikha released the donkey's reins and it ran away. The sheikh was stumped, and took to running after his own donkey, tripping over his pants, leaving the graveyard grounds with his arse-cheeks still visible to the world. People ran after him, laughing at him and reproaching him, until they seized him and gave him a beating for violating public morals.

Bassem: HAHAHAHA! You wish you were the *sheikha* of this story, you crook-necked bitch.

Basra: This is a true story Renée, and everyone knows the name of the sheikh. It's Naim Qassem, he comes sometimes to the court and cosies up to the commander of the faithful. It is said that he loves boys.

Fariyaqiyyah: He got what he deserved, this Sheikh Qassem. She has a strong heart to laugh at him like this. What I fear is that the storyteller is a man and not a woman. By God, it would be better if you asked a feminist author to adapt this story into a play. Men write about a woman's pleasure as if it's separable from the centuries in which women were undermined in society. Come on, how many women do we know who orgasm in their bed and know their pleasure spots? My husband is afraid of a woman's infinite potential for ecstasy, which it can't be said applies to him. So, he constantly defers and demurs, refusing to play with me, and whenever I urge him to teach me how to read, he rushes to a *ghawiya*. Soon after, he comes back and informs me that even the whores don't demand continuous ecstasy like I do, that I am strange, and that my desire is not the desire of civilised urban women. That was until I cuckolded him and brought home a boy twenty years younger than me who pleasured me all day. My husband lost his mind when he found out, and let out bitter sobs. But at this my heart did not bend, which made him wildly agitated and mutinous. He threatened and thundered, but what can he do? He is but an impoverished writer, and my father is the one who provides us with money. A few days later, he calmed down, promised never to return to those whores, and pledged to satisfy me even if it took the entire night. He mentioned that he read in al-Tifashi's book that an unsatisfied woman will incontrovertibly resort to adultery.

Basra: You know, I never thought of the relationship that connects language and speech with a woman's sexual orgasm. We prostitutes are used to moaning, but in the context of our work, we are wordless. Only when we are together, far away from the prying ears of men, straight women, and those *sheikhat* who abuse their closeness to the Caliph, only then do we whisper what we are afraid to divulge outside our intimate circles. Do you think that the paucity of terms in Arabic, in its various dialects, that relate to a lesbian woman's experience, is part and parcel of the system that oppresses women?

Fariyaqiyyah: Surely! If we glance at this book that contains our current speech, we'd immediately notice the difference between the number of terms that express the sexual identity of men as compared with the terms that express the sexual identity of women. This difference is vast even in the gay lexicon, not to mention the entire language. This linguistic poverty makes the female orgasm into a mysterious thing, difficult to ponder and think about.

Renée: You say this even though your husband has revealed more than 150 Arabic terms for the vagina – not to mention what Faris collected of the lexicon of sex and the body, for both women and men.

Masoud: But Mary has a point. Thinking of and contemplating a woman, and her body, and her needs, and her rights, should not be left for men, and this is what has happened in our language for centuries. If we want to nurture the linguistic concepts that relate to women, we must first think about the condition of women, the state of her sisters and her children, and not leave such dangerous topics to the whimsical accounts of men.

Bassem: Yes, yes! You are correct! But let's stop with this heavy talk. Let's dance! Raw'a, bring us the derbuka, and let's go girls! Let's sing and dance and forget men, I beg you!

Raw'a: I thought you liked men.

Bassem: Only if they are prepared to suck dick hihihihi!

[With Renée on the derbuka, Masoud on the oud, Bassem opens the dance floor with a song.]

O Nadda Naddam, O Nadda.
Flowers blossom on her cheek.
If they don't give you to me
The high mountains I will seek.
Nadda opened Instagram
Put a story of the Hammam
Beside her, the dog naps;
I'm afraid that he will snap!
Now Nadda has a TikTok,
Whoever she wants, she blocks,
And she wants to talk, but talk she does not...

Living in the Ellipses

Mejdulene Bernard Shomali

I don't remember the first time I heard Fairuz's searing voice. She dropped seven studio albums before I was born. By 1982 Umm Kulthoum had come and gone, her legacy as wondrous as the pyramids. Warda, Majida, Sabah: their voices are as familiar to me as my father's laugh or the smell of garlic cooking in olive oil. I am not a musicologist; I cannot analyse with any accuracy what musical period we occupy. Except to say I have been fortunate to live in the golden glow of Arab divas. Not only alongside those famous women who dominated sound and screen, but as the baby to three older sisters and our youthful mother. Femininity was an art ever cultivated – embodiment, movement, adornment. And there was joy in it, the joy of our togetherness; this secret club of women who wielded hair dryers and hips like magical weapons.

I knew I wasn't like them long before I knew why. I was more invested in the besties and frenemies I grew up with than I was in boys; the intimacies I shared with girls more potent than any others. All three of my sisters married men. At the engagement party of the last one, I looked across the dance floor and knew I would never be at the centre of an event like this. I felt resigned – not a loss, just an observation. I have wondered if I would have come to know my queerness sooner if I had been a masculine child. I am struck in the glossary by how the majority of entries about queer women operate through gender subversion: أخت رجال, مسترجلة, حسن صبي. I enjoyed being a girl and so it did not occur to me that I would enjoy fucking one. The intensity of my affection for my girl friends and my fealty to women I attributed to my femme-rich family and my reverence for their power.

Which brings us back to Fairuz. She released 'Al Bostah' in 1979 as the first track off *Waḥdoun*'s b-side. It is somewhat unique in her oeuvre as a song not originally composed and written for her, but rather a cover from the play *Nazl el Sarour* (a production from Ziad Rahbani, her son, who also produced *Waḥdoun*). In the song, Fairuz rides the bus from Himlaya to Tannourine, making observations about the passengers and yearning for a black-eyed woman named ʿaliyah. Joseph Saqr's original performance of the song is charming but in the hands of Fairuz 'Al Bostah' is intoxicating. Fairuz's vocals inculcate the song's obsession with ʿaliyah in its listener. Fairuz makes us remember ʿaliyah and her black eyes. I may not know the first time I heard Fairuz, but I remember the realization that she was singing about a woman. I played 'Al Bostah' on repeat for weeks. The drama, the power! I heard her longing and found in it my own.

The absence of language around women and feminine forms of queerness signifies that femininity is (falsely) perceived as a natural performance for women while masculinity is a transgression.

'Al Bostah' is certainly not the first song where the singer and the object of affection share the same gender. In Arabic it is incredibly common for men to sing love songs which use masculine suffixes and nouns. There are several theories about this tendency: that songs are generated from poetry and poets eschewed the feminine for its impact on rhyme and metre; others suggest the masculine obscured the subject of the verse and protected the writers; still others attribute it to the universality of the masculine default in Arabic. Whatever the case, the absence of the feminine in what are arguably the most common parlances of love and lust – poetry and music –echoes beyond the end of the song. Men were singing to men, and women were singing to men. Who sang to women? 'Al Bostah' is electric in part for the queer possibility it blooms between women.

When one makes note of such homoerotic potential in Arabic music, especially such beloved music, people can become defensive. They point out how music videos featured heterosexual pairings. They offer the grammatical explanations. They argue the *intention* of heterosexuality overrides the *potential* of queerness. What if we set down this dismissive anxiety and approach with curiosity? I am not arguing all this Arabic music is fundamentally queer (although ...). Instead, I ask: how and when are we to speak or sing of desire between women, especially when gender subversion does not apply? When ready language and examples are not available?

The answer holds two truths in tension. First, language, with its double entendres, its playful possibilities and its dangerous elisions is incredibly significant to how we think and understand the world. Absences in our language, seemingly arbitrary, are not simply reflections of the world, but avenues for constructing and maintaining social norms. The absence of language around

women and feminine forms of queerness signifies that femininity is (falsely) perceived as a natural performance for women while masculinity is a transgression. Consider how Umm Kulthoum has often been rumoured to be queer while Fairuz has not, and how this rumour is accompanied by commentary about her unconventional gender presentations. The tendency to accentuate deviation accounts for the plethora of language in the collection about masculinity in women and femininity in men. There is also a tendency in heteronormative cultures (Arab and not) to dismiss femininity in women as trivial, inherently shallow. This form of misogyny is so insipid and boring it hardly bears attention, except to say that it is not for nothing that so many of us (queer and not) worship at the altar of Arab divas. My delight in Fairuz's obsession with 'aliyah reflects the desire to see oneself represented in the culture: a feminine woman longing for another woman. It bears no significance that Fairuz is not herself known or rumored to be queer. The song's emotion and potential exceed facticity.

Then, a second truth: like all symbolic orders, language will always be insufficient to narrate the intimacies of our lives. Language hints, hovers, and caresses but it does not complete or capture. While the glossary testifies to the powerful capacity of language and its role in fashioning and articulating society and the self, it will necessarily be incomplete. Language is not only incomplete for the ways it creates and maintains norms but incomplete for what it cannot grasp. Even if we redress biased absences and create a glossary to describe women's sexualities (like the delicious one constructed in Issa's 'A Dance of Gossip'), there would still be more: more feeling, more flesh, more experience, more subject than the language can bear.

This failure of language for me is not exclusively a failure. I am drawn to what cannot be named. There is the pleasure of representation, the thrill of hearing Fairuz sing with such passion to another woman. And there is the pleasure of moving unmarked, the pleasure at refusing easy classification. In worlds ruled by binaries, by demands to exist within flat categories, the absence of language can feel like the absence of capture. There is pleasure in a world that resists cooptation by outsiders. I have known communities of queers who have thrived without ever being known beyond their members. Who found one another with a look, a longing, or a song and chose to operate in that ephemeral and ambient space as a form privacy and protection. Similarly, I have known communities with words and codes all their own: secret languages that never made it to public record.

For Arab women who are so often the subject of intense scrutiny and simultaneously empty stereotype, it can be powerful to offer 'I am not' without offering 'I am.' To answer with refusal the relentless pressure to unveil, to reveal. To be legible to oneself without needing to legible to another. The absence of language in these instances is not exclusively an erasure. It might also be an opportunity to imagine a different kind of body, a different kind of community. One not beholden to the limitations of the language available, precisely because we are not represented by it. Fairuz longs for 'aliyah. Perhaps our expectation that queerness operate within gender subversion relieves scrutiny on Fairuz's affection, allows her to explore it, to share it, to wonder. In the absence of coded language and queer archetypes, more forms of queerness become possible. In the story of my sexuality there was an excess, something more I could not neatly slot into language. I wasn't queer like tomboys and I wasn't straight like my sisters. I knew what I was not, and because there did not seem to be a name for what I was, an operating manual, or a set of rules, I was free to discover what I might become.

To be clear, I love language and I love Arabic specifically. This glossary witnesses the imagination of Arabic speakers and the capacity of Arabic itself. It bubbles with word play, neologisms, transliteration, and entendre. As much as I love language, I also love the ellipses and all that is unspoken. I adore excess and that which shimmers just beyond the line of sight and sound. Something that lives in touch or on the tip of the tongue. Something known but not named, familiar but not decipherable. Something like what Fairuz senses and riders toward Tannourine do not: the intensity of her devotion, the mystery of 'aliyah's eyes, what they promise. While we can anchor ourselves in existing language or generate something new, we need not limit ourselves to what is available in the symbolic order. Whole worlds await us in the pause, the between, the beyond. Whole universes await in the space between Himlaya and Tannourine, if we are up for the ride.

An Effeminate Moroccan

Translated from French by Edwin Nasr

Abdellah Taïa

He's offering his ass to the sun and to everybody else. Look at the way he walks and talks and plays with his eyes. He really has no shame. One day we'll have to find a solution.

The world knew on my behalf before even I did. That is, my intimate truth, what I am and what has immediately become a problem for them.

I was innocence, unconsciousness. A baby. A little boy, barely three, five, seven years old.

I don't particularly remember, nor do I have precise images of, myself from that time. Only sensations, intuitions, flashes I'm sometimes unable to even situate. It was a different time. Another age. Early childhood, the years they say will determine the rest of your life. Everything happened here, of course, between the world and myself, between my city of Salé and myself, between our neighbourhood of Hay Salam and myself, between my precarious family and myself, between my six sisters and myself, between my two brothers and myself, between my parents and myself. Between the earth and myself, between the sky and myself.

I got lucky. Despite the loneliness, I was initially very much surrounded. Years and years in the midst of bodies very close to me, people who very often laughed at me but did not reject me. At least not yet. Little Abdellah is special. He is not like us. He is not one of us. Our parents brought him home from a garbage can, that's for sure. He's not really a boy. What is he, really?

It's all over for him. No future for him here. He won't survive. That's for sure. But he doesn't seem to be ashamed of who he is. He's comfortable. Look at the way he sits in that chair. That's not how boys sit on chairs. Look at how he's lying on his stomach. He's offering his ass to the sun and to everybody else. Look at the way he walks and talks and plays with his eyes. He really has no shame. One day we'll have to find a solution. Boys like him can be corrected. They can be cured. We will send him to the imam of the Hay Salam mosque; a man of God will know how to reconfigure

him. Make him a real man. He will save him and lead him to the right path. The path of good, not that of evil. The imam knows Allah well.

To them I am a tragedy. But not to me. Not for the little child I was once and that I still am.

I don't have a name for what I am yet. I don't even ask myself the question. Why lock myself into one name, one definition, go to jail of my own free will? No. This is not for me. My gender is small. It's male, as far as I can see. But that doesn't mean anything. With this small sex, the possibilities of existing in this world seem infinite to me. With or without this small sex, I am what I am and I believe I am happy.

Happy.

Very poor, like my family and many other families in Salé. But happy, somewhat in an organic way. Existing just like that, in a pure merging with the world, the great World. With the universe, the great Universe. No need to complicate anything. No need to try to know, to know *tout court*. Just to exist. To follow what flows in me. To invite others to see what flows in me.

Happy little Abdellah. It was exactly that. Happy to be what I am without asking myself too many questions.

I am the eighth child. A boy who came after six girls. The long-awaited boy. My mother told me that she was happy when she gave birth to me. And still, today, when I am not feeling well, when I am depressed, when I am in the dark and I want to leave life, my mother's confession comes back to me. It imposes itself on me.

The hand of God reaching out to me.

I don't know if my mother loved me as much as my six sisters and two brothers. I don't care. I have her confession in me. She said it one winter morning. These words, uttered in Arabic, came out of her mouth and her heart: Abdellah, I was happy when I gave you life. This is what must have saved me when hell finally opened its doors before me from the age of eight.

Whatever they said, whatever they did to me, my mother's happy words allowed me to resist them. Do not fall. Do not fall. Do not change. I am not ashamed of myself. I will not change. It is you who should be ashamed.

I am not ashamed to dance for my sisters, for my whole family. To entertain them with imitations of the Egyptian actresses on our small TV screen. To speak like them, to dance like them. Tahiya Carioca and Naïma Akef.

Very early on, I was a star in my family. And I understood very quickly that I had to regularly give them something to entertain them, to make them laugh, to amuse them. Perform for them. Dance for them. Through the Egyptian dance, find a way for them to accept me and to love me in spite of themselves. A small moment of happiness, a momentary opening.

Abdellah the little female dancer.

Abdellah the little male dancer.

Both at the same time. The fusion of several things in me.

Everything stopped at eight years old.

Within the family and in the street, they start calling me *bnita*, the little girl. I am not a *bnita*. Or rather: I could be a *bnita* without shame, only when I want to be. But I am not a *bnita* as they say. Something dirty. Something that isn't right. Something unnatural, unacceptable. Why consider a *bnita* in these terms? Why reject a *bnita* boy? Why do that?

Is a girl dirty?

Is a woman dirty?

They can say what they want. Insult. Invent and reinvent hate. That's not my problem. Life tells me not to listen to them. Don't change. Don't trip over your own feet.

I am obsessed with old Egyptian films. I greatly look forward to them. They are only shown on Moroccan television in the 1980s once a week, on Friday evenings.

Egyptian films. Arabic films. Yes, these films express themselves in the Arabic language. It's much better than American films, these violent westerns. It's much better than French films, all talkative and incomprehensible. I am in an Arab world that speaks in Arabic and I don't want to leave this world. The wait for Egyptian films is unbearable. It is also delicious, enjoyable. The little black-and-

white television: it's the only place where I can see people like us, who come out of the same bath as us, who do ordinary, incredible things. People who dare. People who talk about love. People who partake in evildoing. People who fight. People who scream. Screaming. Cry. Crying. And who sometimes touch each other with a rare tenderness.

Ever since I saw *Fadiḥa Fi Zamalek* [in English: 'Scandal in Zamalek'], I have been waiting impatiently for Moroccan television to show a film with this incredible woman, a sublime actress who is not at all afraid to exist through evil *and* in evil. Berlanti Abdelhamid. A real star.

Everything about her attracts me. How she walks. How she talks. The contempt in her eyes. The arrogance in her words. The strategies she concocts to fulfil her desires. Going to the men and inflaming them, thirsting them, starving them, destroying them, and overthrowing them, leaving them with only a crumbling memory of man and his social status.

Berlanti Abdelhamid is not afraid. She enacts revenge while dancing. She enacts revenge without shame. She goes towards the end, towards death, without ever repenting. She is extraordinary. In the literal sense. She is a woman who hurts men as they once hurt her.

Berlanti Abdelhamid is portrayed as a villain in these Egyptian films. But she is a heroine. The story revolves around her and her incredibly sensual and free body.

For the little boy that I am, to see a bad heroine, an Arab star who is bad and fair at the same time, is a revelation. All the other Egyptian films had heroines who were not evil. Except for the films that featured Berlanti Abdelhamid.

More than following an obsession, I am in a process of identification. I am on the same path as Berlanti Abdelhamid. Like her, I pretend to submit to this cruel world. Like her, I will have to think about revenge. To think about my revenge, and how to enact it.

This world that hurts us so much doesn't deserve anything else. Revenge. Revenge. And maybe one day I can learn to love again. Maybe become like the other star I worship: Magda.

A little cat like Magda. Very sensitive, very sophisticated. Very smart too.

To choose this other strategy: false kindness.

Find a way to make them stop raping me, throwing stones at me spitting on me.

Find a way to get out alive from the too many prisons they build here for people like me.

I am twelve years old. A little teenager. You must be a man now, Abdellah. But, in the meantime, they will continue to rape you.

Throw dirty names in your face. Because that's what you are: a dirty effeminate teenager.

A dirty effeminate Moroccan.

A *zamel*.

That's what you are. That's what you are. A *zamel*. You belong to all of us, to all the men in the neighbourhood. We will all rape you. And you won't say anything.

You are the problem. Not us.

You're just an *'aṭṭāy*. A little piece of cheese. A Kiri, a laughing cow.

You want more? More insults?

The list of names they gave me in the Hay Salam neighbourhood is so long.

A *sawsan* boy.

A *zoubida* boy. Like *zabda*, the butter.

An *aatika* boy.

A *taarija* boy.

A banana boy. You like bananas, Abdellah, don't you? Follow me. I've got a big one for you.

They also called me Samira Said for years, because I would always sing her song, *Mouch Ḥatnazel 'annak 'abdan* ('I will never give up on you').

1 The [illegible]

Abdellah, the *bnita* of Hay Salam, seems to be used to it by now. He has been raped for years. He does not say anything. He does not complain. He lowers his head. His ass is on offer.

At the time, at the age of fourteen, my situation had become critical in the neighbourhood. Abdellah is growing up. What are we going to do with him now? He is almost a man. Continue raping him? Would you agree with that? Yes, we all agree. Abdellah, the *bnita* of Hay Salam, seems to be used to it by now. He has been raped for years. He does not say anything. He does not complain. He lowers his head. His ass is on offer. He likes it, Abdellah. He loves getting his ass handed to him every day.

Every day.

Samira Said saved me.

A Moroccan woman who left Morocco to go to Cairo. And there, in the world of Berlanti Abdelhamid and Faten Hamama, she became a star, a superstar for the whole Arab world to enjoy. Morocco's reaction, then, was atrocious. When they realised that Samira Said had definitely escaped them, that she had reached the status of an icon, they invented all these rumours to destroy her, sully her, annihilate her. But it was too late. Nobody could do anything against her. She is free, Samira Said. Free. Free. Put this in your head and go to sleep with your heart full of hate and jealousy.

Samira Said is free.

She has gone far, far away from you, and has become her own dream, a dream that speaks in Arabic. She has realised her dream. She has found the place from which to make both her voice and message heard.

You are right: I am Samira Said. One day I will be Samira Said. For real.

In the meantime, I sing and sing 'Mouch hatnazel aannak abadan'.

In 1986, I did not pay attention to the words of this song. Today, I tell myself that another Abdellah in me intuitively understood that this song was not addressed to a loved one, a heterosexual man. No. Samira Said was addressing herself. She is her own love object.

Samira Said is love.

She sings:

You who by your love gave my life a taste and a colour,
I will never give up on you no matter what.

Whatever happens, gay Abdellah will continue to dance and sing. Abdellah will look for impossible love amid solitude.

No matter what happens, they will not succeed in bringing me down, destroying me, killing me.

I grew up. I survived. Alone. Do you hear? I survived on my own. That's a miracle right there.

I'm now forty-nine years old.

I know I'll never get an apology from them. My parents and siblings, my cousins and friends, my rapists. No understanding. No tender or healing words. You're just a deviant, one of my sisters used to say to me, in the mid-1980s. Interestingly, she would say it in French.

That's right, my dearest sister. That's it, I'm just a queer. The queer from Salé. From Hay Salam. A queer for myself *and* of the World.

A Moroccan queer.

Happy in spite of all the evil you did to him.

Reconciled with myself, without you or your hatred.

Until the very end of my life, I will proudly continue imitating Berlanti Abdelhamid and singing alongside Samira Said.

About the Contributors

Rabih Alameddine (he/him)

Rabih Alameddine is the author of the novels *The Wrong End of the Telescope* (2021), *The Angel of History* (2016), *An Unnecessary Woman* (2014), *The Hakawati* (2008), *I, the Divine* (2001) and *Koolaids: The Art of War* (1998), as well as the short story collection *The Perv*. His books have been translated into more than twenty languages. His most recent awards include the 2019 Dos Passos Prize, the 2021 Lannan Prize for Fiction and the 2022 Pen/Faulkner award. He divides his time between his bedroom and his living room.

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Saqer A. Almarri is a research fellow at New York University Abu Dhabi's Humanities Research Fellowship for the Study of the Arab World. He holds a PhD in Translation Studies from Binghamton University, State University of New York. His work primarily explores how gender variance is perceived, conceptualised and developed through the writings of pre-modern Arabic writers with a focus on conceptions of intersexuality. He has previously published articles in the *Body and Religion* (2020), *Women and Language* (2018), *TSQ* (2016) and *Syntax Freezone* (2015).

Nisrine Chaer (he/him)

Nisrine Chaer is a researcher and organiser. He is currently a PhD candidate in Gender Studies at Utrecht University and his research primarily focuses on respectability, hypervisibility and safety with a focus on trans and queer migration in both the Netherlands and Lebanon. His work has appeared in *Kohl Journal for Body and Gender Research* (2015), *Global Dialogue* (2016), *Global Encyclopedia of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer History* (Charles Scribner's Sons, 2019), *ZemZem* (2020), *Women Rising: Resistance, Revolution, and Reform in the Arab Spring and Beyond* (NYU Press, 2020), *Crisis Magazine* (2022), *Transcultural Psychiatry* (2023), *Journal of Refugee Studies* (2023) and *UntoldMag* (2023). He also is a member of Queer Mutual Aid Lebanon, and co-founder of Sehaq Queer Refugees Group in Amsterdam.

Sophie Chamas (they/she)

Sophie Chamas is a lecturer in gender studies at SOAS, University of London. Their academic work focuses on theorising queer Arabness as a political orientation rather than a hybridised identity, and thinking through the potential

of the radical political imaginary at the intersection of queer and gender studies, political economy and Middle East Studies.

Ziad Dallal (he/him)

Ziad Dallal is an academic, author and translator. He teaches Arabic literature at Bard College, and has translated essays and short stories for several Arab authors. Dallal's areas of research and interest include modern Arabic literature and intellectual history, critical theory, translation theory, political philosophy, philology, Marxism and finance and film theory. He has written about contemporary Arabic culture and served as lead translator and adviser on *This Is Home: A Refugee Story*, a 2017 Sundance Film Festival Audience Award winner for world cinema documentary. Dallal's writing has appeared in *Bidayat*, *Assafir*, *Alif:Journal of Comparative Poetics*, *Review of Middle Eastern Studies*, *Journal of Arabic Literature* and Beirut Art Center's *The Derivative*.

Haitham Haddad (he/him)

Haitham Haddad is a visual artist from Palestine whose work centres on historical and contemporary manifestations of myth and folklore, as well as political tensions between the individual and the collective. He works at the intersection between printmaking, illustration, video and tattooing. Haddad is the founder and creative director of Studio Mnjnk, a multidisciplinary graphic design studio with a focus on experimental typography and Arab visual culture. His work has been exhibited and featured in numerous museums and cultural institutions, such as the AM Qattan Foundation (Palestine), Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam (Netherlands), The Mosaic Rooms (UK), Vier Nul Vier (Belgium), ICD Brookfield Place (UAE), Qalandiya International (Palestine), Bard College (New York) and the Royal College of Art (UK). He currently lives and works in New York.

Adam HajYahia (he/him)

Adam HajYahia is an independent researcher, writer and curator from Palestine, currently living in New York. His research focuses on images and performativity in the revolutionary context of Palestine and the region, psychoanalysis and labour, as well as negative economic speculation within contemporary art. His work and writing have been presented and featured in various museums, universities and cultural institutions, such as MoMA PS1, Bard College, the Mosaic Rooms, the James Gallery at the CUNY Graduate Center, the Berlin Biennale 12 and Mophradat. He has given talks and lectures at the Harvard Law School and Wolfson College, University of Oxford. He is currently Studio Manager and Assistant Curator at the Center for Human Rights and the Arts, Bard College.

Rana Issa (she/her)

Rana Issa is a writer, translator and curator. She is cofounder and artistic director of Masahat for Arab Culture in Exile, an institution that programmes and produces cultural expression by Arab and global South artists and writers in Norway. Her book *The Modern Arabic Bible* (Edinburgh University Press, 2023) and her academic contributions in the cultural and literary history of the Arab *nahda*, particularly her interest in Arabic historical linguistics and lexicography, were the key to going back to Arabic as her preferred writing language. She is currently finalising a queer memoir in Arabic and Norwegian about broken characters in her Palestinian and Lebanese family. She is a recipient of

fellowships from the Houghton Library, the Center of Advanced Studies in Oslo, the Norwegian Research Council, the Norwegian Nonfiction Union for Writers and Translators, the Free Word Foundation and AFAC, among others. Her text *Khatim Izdihar* (*Al-Jumhuriya*, 2021) is part of *Hartaqat*, a theatrical performance by Rabih Mroue and Lina Majdalani (premiered in Lausanne in 2023). She is a graduate of the American University of Beirut and the University of Oslo where she taught until she left academia in 2022. Rana dreams of a liberated Palestine.

Suneela Mubayi (she/they)

Suneela Mubayi is a translator, independent scholar, and writer of Kashimiri Indian and American Jewish descent, whose interests stand at the juncture where language, the body, and poetry intersect. She completed a PhD in Arabic literature from NYU with a thesis on vagabond poets between classical and modern Arabic poetry. She has translated close to 100 essays, poems, and fiction pieces between Arabic, English, and Urdu for publications such as *Banipal*, *Words Without Borders*, *Asymptote*, *Jadaliyya*, *Mada Masr*, and elsewhere. She was the joint recipient of a translation fellowship from the National Endowment for the Arts, and likes linguistic puns, Iraqi maqam and Syrian TV serials.

Edwin Nasr (they/them)

Edwin Nasr (they/them) were born in Haret Sakher, Lebanon, and now live and work in Berlin, Germany. Nasr held curatorial and administrative positions at CCA Berlin, Center for Contemporary Arts (2021–2023); Ashkal Alwan, the Lebanese Association for Plastic Arts, Beirut (2018–2023); and de Appel, Amsterdam (2021–2022). Their research is broadly concerned with art and archival practices' engagement with histories of the anti-colonial Left, as well as their propensity to make legible spaces and modalities of capture and extraction. Forthcoming and recent essays can be found in *Afterall Journal*, *Mousse Magazine*, *Bidoun*, *n+1*, *The Funambulist*, *Spike Art Magazine*, *e-flux Criticism*, *Metropolis M*, as well as in exhibition catalogues by the Sharjah Art Foundation, Portikus Frankfurt, Grazer Kunstverein and the Kochi-Muziris Biennale.

Mejdulene Bernard Shomali (she/her)

Mejdulene Bernard Shomali is a queer Palestinian poet and Associate Professor in Gender, Women's and Sexuality Studies at the University of Maryland Baltimore County. Her poetry can be read in The Adroit Journal, Copper Nickel, Tinderbox, Diode Press, The Pinch Journal, Mizna and elsewhere. She has published articles in *Multi-Ethnic Literatures of the US*, the *Journal of Middle East Women's Studies* and several edited collections. Her first book, *Between Banat: Queer Arab Critique and Transnational Arab Archive*s is available from Duke University Press. Her poetry chapbook *agriculture of grief: prayers for my father's dementia* is forthcoming from Finishing Line Press (August 2024).

Hamed Sinno (they/she/he)

Hamed Sinno is a composer, writer, performer and social justice advocate. Sinno writes and lectures about popular culture as engaged practice. They have been *Mashrou Leila*'s lyricist and front-person since 2008, agitating conversations around representational politics, free speech and sexual freedoms in the Middle East. H has a BFA from the Department of Architecture and Design at the American University of Beirut and an MA in Digital Musics

from Dartmouth College. Their debut full-length opera, *Westerly Breath*, was in development at *The Industry* Los Angeles and opened at the New York Met Museum in January 2024. Their solo debut, *Poems of Consumption*, explores the overlaps of consumerism, mental illness and environmental crisis. *Poems of Consumption* debuted at London's Barbican Centre in July 2023.

Abdellah Taïa (he/him)

Abdellah Taïa was born in Rabat, Morocco, in 1973. He is the author of nine novels written in French (published in France by Editions du Seuil), including *Salvation Army* (2006) and *An Arab Melancholia* (2008), both translated into English by Semiotext(e), and *Infidels* (2012) published in English by Seven Stories Press. His novel *Le jour* du Roi was awarded the French Prix de Flore in 2010. *Salvation Army*, his first movie as a director, is adapted from his eponymous novel. The film was selected for the Venice Film Festival 2013, TIFF 2013, New Directors 2014 and won many international prizes. His novel *A Country for Dying*, translated into English by Seven Stories Press, won the Pen America Literary Award in 2021.

About the Author

Marwan Kaabour is a graphic designer, artist and writer. His interdisciplinary practice builds pathways between communication and design, curation, pedagogy and political activism. Alongside his independent projects, he works with non-profit institutions, companies and individuals in arts and culture sectors.

In 2019, Kaabour founded *Takweer*, an online archive of queer narratives in Arab history and popular culture. *The Queer Arab Glossary*, his first book, came out of Takweer's years-long focus on Arabic queer slang.

Kaabour moved from his hometown Beirut to London in 2011 to pursue a master's degree in Graphic Design from the London College of Communication, before joining renowned design agency Barnbrook. After more than seven years with Barnbrook, first as Designer and later as Senior Designer, he founded his own studio in 2020.

Kaabour's commissioned design work spans visual identities, publication and exhibition design, marketing campaigns, wayfinding systems and art direction, among others. He has worked with leading cultural institutions, including the V&A Museum, Phaidon, Art Basel, The National Gallery, Thames & Hudson, Serpentine Galleries, Hayward Gallery, Zaha Hadid Foundation, Somerset House and the Mosaic Rooms. He designed the *Rihanna* book, which was one of *Time* magazine's best photo books of 2019.

Kaabour has written for *Ajam Media Collective*, *Chutney Magazine* and *Journal Safar*. His work and words have been featured in *Another Magazine*, the *New York Times*, *BBC Arabic*, *L'Orient-Le Jour*, *It's Nice That*, *Gay Times* and *Dezeen*. He has given talks, lectures and interviews at the Harvard University Graduate Student Union, Design Museum (London), London Design Festival, Arab Image Foundation, Bishopsgate Institute, SOAS University of London, London College of Communication, University of Brighton and Camberwell College of Arts.

Kaabour was named one of *Elephant* magazine's Artists of the Year in 2021, and was featured in the UN Free & Equal campaign for LGBTIQ+ equality led by the United Nations Human Rights Office in 2023.

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